





DE GRUYTER

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MANUSCRIPT, PRINT AND MEMORY

RELICS OF THE CANKAM IN TAMILNADU

STUDIES IN MANUSCRIPT CULTURES

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I Introduction

Wandelt sich rasch auch die Welt
wie Wolkengestalten,
alles Vollendete fällt
heim zum Uralten.
(Rilke, *Sonette an Orpheus*)

I.1 Sources, Methods and Aims

What causes the transmission of a song, a story, or a text to vary? Why is the passing on of knowledge, from generation to generation, never a stable process, but fraught with all kinds of hazards? What are the factors, apart from the wiliness of the human mind and the elements of improvisation inherent in the course of human history, that account for the flexibilities in such processes? One set of important factors lies, no doubt, in the very objects that form the material basis for any transmission, be it the human voice, manuscripts– in all the multifarious meanings that word can assume in different cultural contexts –, books, not to mention more modern media, such as films, computer files or the internet. It was the goal of the Hamburg Research Group, of which the present study is part, to investigate "textual variance in dependence on the medium", that is, to follow up and arrive at a more precise idea of the role that changes of media, or the fluctuation between different media such as those of orality, script and print, has played in particular cultural contexts of transmission.

The Tamil classical corpus of the so-called *Caṅkam* anthologies lends itself as an ideal candidate for a study of this type, because in its roughly two thousand years of transmission, it has undergone a fair number of media changes as well as shifts in evaluation. From a fluid body of oral poems it was transformed, during a period of cultural restoration after political upheaval, into written lyrical anthologies which some centuries later were canonised and supplied with a commentarial tradition. Through a few more centuries of mixed fortunes, these anthologies were gradually supplanted by a new canon of a more religious-devotional orientation and finally reduced to being an object of study for a learned poeto-grammatical tradition. In the second half of the 19th century, when printing began to massively change the intellectual scene in Tamilnadu, manuscripts

of the older texts were rediscovered as a testimony to former (not only pre-colonial, but also pre-Sanskritic) Tamil glory. Manuscripts of different kinds, on palm-leaf and on paper, document both premodern neglect and the slow process of resurrection. This has culminated in a prolific print production of fresh editions until today, of which the most recent are "critical" and "definitive" editions. Sadly, manuscripts and prints survive from little more than the last three hundred years of the process just delineated. However, it is precisely the context of manuscript studies that changes the angle of looking at transmission history.

Even if no material sources are available, the idea that a text must have been transmitted in the form of a manuscript alters our perspective. It must have been the responsibility of someone, or rather of many people, as a physical object to be held, handled, kept, preserved, copied, and, finally, to be handed down through the generations. Of course philologists are, in their hearts of hearts, Platonists. They believe, even if they do not say so nowadays, that a great work of art is something absolute, unadulterable if not unalterable, something that, in some mysterious way, is capable of looking after itself and not subject to the laws of time. Under the patina of centuries, or even millennia, its living texture shines, and only a barbarian would call such a thing, or the language it is written in, dead. This is as it may be. For the people who are part of the chain of transmitters, it is also an object, sometimes a cause of pride, sometimes a cause of puzzlement, or of worry, and they will voice their anxiety or their joy. Thus the successive embodiments of a text will leave a trail in the thickets of time they have travelled, a trail that it is possible to recover, even if its traces are few and far between, and at times elusive.

What are the sources we have available, in addition to the manuscripts themselves? Firstly, manuscripts of course preserve a far greater spectrum of information than just the texts they are supposed to transmit. Handwritten texts appear surrounded by a variety of paratexts,[1] such as titles, colophons, glosses, commentaries, invocations, blessings and mnemonic stanzas, all terms that will be examined in more detail in the course of this introduction. Secondly, closer to us on a temporal axis, come the documents left behind by those who collected, handled and edited the manuscripts, that is, the manuscript descriptions in catalogues and in the prefaces and/or introductions to the early editions. Manuscripts are referred to in studies of history and literary history, in letters, in diaries and in autobiographies. The editing process itself is documented on the one hand in the secondary annotation of manuscripts, especially those on paper, on the other hand, naturally, in the editions that have been published after much toil.

On the further end of the temporal axis we find a variety of textual testimonies that cover roughly a period from about the 8th to the 18th

century. A significant, though in extension minor role is played by inscriptions, which occasionally report on literature, quote, or employ recognisable literary forms. Much more voluminous is the net of cross-references that exists in the commentarial tradition, with its centuries of poetic discussion. An even bigger bulk of material we find in what began as legends of origin of the literary academies (= *Caṅkam*), which in the Tamil case is coextensive with a legend of cultural origins still very much alive. The narrative drive of these early legends created a virtual literary sub-genre of academy stories which have been re-evoked and re-arranged in many contexts, some at liminal points in the fate of the corpus itself. A link between these legends and the textual tradition manifested in the still existing manuscripts is formed by stanzas from an oral tradition, often transmitted with the poems, which allow glimpses at earlier schemes of what we might term literary historiography.

With such a variety of sources from a huge range of temporal and cultural contexts, it is necessary to employ a number of different methods. The early period of corpus formation and the complementary variability is best described in terms of an oral-formulaic-poetry model, modified for the particularities of the Tamil language.[2] A number of indications show that orality continued to play a role in the life of the corpus even after it had long been submitted to writing, an important factor being the underdetermined notation system which required an active knowledge of the sound body of the poem.[3] Thus central issues must include the study of textual practices and systems of education, performance, patronage and inheritance on the one hand, and of copying, storing and preserving on the other hand.[4] This must be supplemented by studying the exegetical practices that were part of the same oral teacher-student culture, a culture that is reported to have also resorted to writing by about the 10th century. All of these factors played a paramount role in safeguarding the texts, even if often in ways that amounted to multiple safeguarding (in cases where there is more than one commentary). Moreover, their written incarnations, especially their individual, handwritten ones which have not yet been subjected to printed standardisation, have also become a repository for reactions to and opinions about the texts, and thus form a privileged access to these texts' reception.[5]

One fairly problematic term that is freely used in this study is "classical". This brings with it the danger of getting caught up in the net of the classicism debate which has been raging in Tamilnadu since 2004 – the year Tamil was officially declared the country's second classical language in addition to Sanskrit. In 2008 this was followed by Canarese and Telugu. This honour (with corresponding financial backing) is now being demanded by more and more of India's local languages, a debate that is predominantly being fought with regard to age and merit. This danger may be avoided by simply

saying that a classical corpus of texts is a corpus that has become, is, or was part of a literary canon at a given point in time. Now, canon seems to be a word that is as problematic as classical, although discussions of the concept and the corresponding process – canonisation – have in recent years taken place in the field of theology rather than that of literature.[6] Ironically, while all the specialists of Indian religions beg to differ or, at the very least, to modify, for the poetic *Caṅkam* corpus, Assmann's famous canon formula works fine: "Ihr sollt nichts wegnehmen und nichts hinzufügen." ("You shall not omit or add anything.")

Textual practices as such do not grow out of thin air. They have to be seen as embedded in a literary culture which, in its turn, is embedded in a historical context, an observation that has become commonplace since Pollock (2003). Modelling "literary cultures in history" has proved fruitful enough for largely accessible periods such as the 19th century. The drawback for earlier periods is that, in the South-Indian case, we very often do not know very much, either about the period in question or about the author, place or time of a particular work. This incurs a certain danger of projecting backwards and thus more or less retranslat-ing meagre data into a more fashionable idiom. Moreover there seems to be a particularly water-tight division between the disciplines dealing with hard-core history and those that deal with literature. While Indian historians in general have a limited and selective access to literary sources, many literary scholars are all too focused on the intricacies of their textual tradition.[7]

The late stages of the transmission process, that is, the period of collecting and deciphering manuscripts as well as preparing actual editions, gain by being assessed in terms of recent research on colonial knowledge production and print culture.[8] For all the progress that has been made in this area, it remains remarkable that although a wide range of documents is perused – studies, catalogues, early prints, biographical material both printed and unprinted, press clippings, etc. – at the same time the most obvious source, the manuscripts that exist in great numbers and are after all the main transmitters of the text as well as the primary witnesses to the editing process, are at best referred to, but rarely read, let alone studied.

One reason why this is so is the restriction of access, although things have become much easier in the age of electronic reproduction, at least with texts that have already been published. Another reason is that manuscripts are difficult to read and tedious for anyone who is not a philologist. One of the major contributions of the present study will be an analysis of primary material. The sophisticated arsenal of traditional textual criticism, both lower and higher, customarily employed to establish the different strata of a text being edited, can also be put to service to document variability

in a collection of witnesses. Instead of reducing the number of variants by elucidating their probable origin, it is possible to determine the liminal factors responsible for the creation of variants. Such a reversal of the traditional *stemma codicum* will proceed from the simple but ambiguous palm-leaf graphemes, document their development into a multiplicity of readings in the new notation system, a multitude gradually reduced in the various processes of editing, ending with the extreme case of a singular text constituted by a modern "definitive" edition.[9]

The very term "definitive edition" highlights one of the problems when dealing with today's most classical corpus, namely the danger of getting mixed up in postcolonial Tamil identity politics.[10] It is not easy to steer clear of the already mentioned classical language discourse, obsessed with antiquity and major exponents such as the Indus Valley heritage (the decipherment of the famous Indus-Valley seals as proto-Dravidian) and Lemuria (the lost continent between Africa and India that was the homeland of the Pāṇṭiyas).[11] A side issue here is the problem of a double dialogue, in English and in Tamil, where Tamil seems to be perceived as a safe medium in which opinions can be voiced that would sound extremist in English. While indigenous academic discourse at least in part overtly avoids being caught up in these highly emotionally charged fields, quite a lot of corresponding sentiment is still subliminally present in the form of a marked anti-Brahmin bias and a general hostility towards Sanskrit.

As the preceding remarks will have shown, I am far from being able to present a theory of textual coagulation, canon formation, transmission and re-evaluation, and in my humble opinion we are rather running the danger of theorising ahead of our data. What is needed on the one hand is a decompartmentalisation of knowledge: the elements of information currently locked up in the various subdisciplines should be brought together. On the other hand, the obvious task is to reassemble the huge amount of forgotten or half-remembered bits and pieces of the larger picture that are lying dormant in archives, in manuscript collections and on library shelves, or that are, in some cases, locked away in cupboards with at best privileged access. Thus the aim of this study is to write a source book of materials for envisaging a complex historical process: the composition and compilation, the reinterpretation and canonisation of a corpus, the canon's decline into near-oblivion and its re-instalment under a new political configuration. As such the volume is meant to be complementary to the series of critical editions of the corpus being brought forth by the *Caṅkam* project in Pondicherry.

I.2 The Corpus

I.2.1 Its Constitution

South India has a special position in the literary traditions of the subcontinent, since Tamil is, apart from Sanskrit, the oldest language for which there is written evidence. Inscriptions go back as far as the second century B. C.E.,[12] while the great literary tradition may be roughly dated to the beginning of the Common Era.[13] It is constituted by two voluminous lyrical anthologies that, according to legend, originated in a literary academy (Tamil *Caṅkam*, from Skt. *saṅgha-*, "community") at the court of the Pāṇṭiyas in the city of Maturai, whither the somewhat incongruous designation "*Caṅkam* texts". The two hyper-anthologies of *Caṅkam* literature, the Eight Anthologies (*eṭṭuttokai*) and the Ten Songs (*pattuppāṭṭu*), form the matrix for large parts of the later literary production, including devotional poetry. They arise out of a tradition of bardic poetry, erotic and heroic in genre, called Akam and Puṟam, with highly formulaic oral predecessors.

The literary history of the first millennium is controversial and its chronology very uncertain. Suggestions as to the beginning of the tradition vary between the 3rd century B. C.E. and the 8th century C. E.[14] An issue that complicates the discussion is the role these texts play on the political level. Virtually fallen into oblivion by the end of the 19th century, they were "rediscovered" in the wake of the newly strengthening Tamil national consciousness and the gradual emancipation from colonial rule, and were edited, commented upon and re-included into the canon of Tamil literature (Zvelebil 1992, Venkatachalapathy 2006, Rajesh 2013). Today they are counted, especially since the classicism debate gained wider attention in the year 2004 (as mentioned above, the year Tamil was officially declared the second classical language of India in addition to Sanskrit), as a cornerstone of Tamil identity against the culturally dominant, Sanskrit-oriented North, a fact that does not help when attempting to view the material objectively.[15] The dating proposed here is based on an analysis of the inner chronology of the texts, which has been gained in the process of text-critical, morpho-syntactical and poetic comparison. The coincidence between the start of the literary tradition and the beginning of the Christian era must be regarded as a mere "date of convenience". To this day no hard facts establishing a connection between the inner, literary and the outer, historical sequence have been convincingly shown to exist. Nothing that is of relevance to the following argument can be regarded as securely dated, before the Pāṇṭiya inscriptions of the 9th century. Consequently, all the dates proposed in Table 1 must be viewed in the first place as relative dates: important is the position a text holds with respect to the other texts, not the actual century attributed to it in this network of correlations.

Table 1: Rough chronology of the *Caṅkam* corpus

Time	Text traditions of the Eight Anthologies and the Ten Songs					
	Pāṇṭiya, Cēra, Cōḻa, etc.		Cēra	?		Pāṇṭiya, Cōḻa, etc.
	Akam	Puṟam	Akam/Puṟam	Akam	mixed	Mixed
1st–3rd c.	*Kuṟuntokai* *Naṟṟiṇai* *Akanāṉūṟu*	*Puṟanāṉūṟu*				
4th c.	↓	↓	*Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* *Patiṟṟuppattu*			*Neṭunalvāṭai* *Porunarāṟṟuppaṭai* *Ciṟupāṇāṟṟuppaṭai* *Perumpāṇāṟ-ṟuppaṭai*
5th c.	↓ *KT* 1	↓				*Malaipaṭukaṭām* *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* *Paṭṭiṉappālai* *Mullaippāṭṭu* *Maturaikkāñci*
6th c.	↓	↓		*Kalittokai*	*Paripāṭal*	*Tirumuru-kāṟṟuppaṭai*
7th c.	invocation verses	→	→	→	?	
	Pāṇṭiya			Pāṇṭiya		?
11th–14th c.			*tokaiyum* *"Eṭṭuttokai"*			*"Pattuppāṭṭu"* *pāṭṭum*

Around the beginning of the first century C. E. the southern tip of India (the areas of modern Tamilnadu and Kerala) was nominally under the control of the three kings (*mūvar*) Cōḻa, Cēra and Pāṇṭiya. In fact it was divided into a great number of small chiefdoms that were engaged in more or less permanent war with one another. Bards wandering between the royal residences created lyrical compositions of variable length in the two basic genres of erotic poetry (Akam) and heroic poetry (Puṟam). It is not clear when these songs or poems were collected into anthologies for the first time, or when they were written down. The first indication for the existence of an anthology (and *mutatis mutandis* of a written version) is the poem that today is considered the first verse of the *Kuṟuntokai* (*KT*; the collection of 400 short poems).[16] When read without the prejudice of the traditional interpretation, it turns out that this poem is not a love poem, but an invocation stanza to a deity (in this case Murukaṉ), a type of verse later on found as a prelude to most texts.[17]

A strong argument for this explanation is the form of the poem,

which has parallels in several others of the oldest theistic poems in the Tamil tradition, most notably those of the *Cilappatikāram*.[18] There the deity is not being addressed directly, often not even named with its proper name, but the description focuses on a place connected with the god, while at the same time there is an evocation of attributes which are sufficient for identifying the deity in question. This is well in accordance with notions evident in early *Caṅkam* poems (where the main topic is never religious), namely a tangible lack of personal individuation in spiritual or non-corporeal beings, who usually appear in groups and are very often connected to a particular location such as a tree or a mountain. As for the technique of avoiding proper names or at least embedding them in a series of epithets and allusions to various divine deeds, one would be tempted to call this a constitutive element of the poetic game for the entire tradition that is to follow. A comparison with other early theistic songs makes a date around the late 5th century plausible, that is, if we concede as conceivable the traditional chronology of the *Cilappatikāram* being older than other early texts in the devotional corpora, namely, on the Vaiṣṇava side, the early *Antātis*, and on the Śaiva side, the songs of Kāraikkālammaiyār (both dated to the 6th c.).

An additional argument for such an interpretation of *KT* 1 lies in the fact that the *Kuṟuntokai* does not contain four hundred poems, a figure familiar from several other *Caṅkam* anthologies, but four hundred and one. An easy explanation might be that the *KT* already existed as a collection with an invocation verse when it was chosen to be included in a first hyper-anthology. Instead of discarding the original invocation, the compiler simply prefaced it with another of his own composing (or choosing).

Perhaps around the beginning of the 7th century (or at any rate prior to the major works of the bhakti canon), a series of invocation stanzas written by an author named Pāratam Pāṭiya Peruntēvaṉār ("Peruntēvaṉār, who has sung the *Mahābhārata*")[19] shows that a number of other anthologies must have existed, several of them presumably compiled under the patronage of the Pāṇṭiyas.[20] Here we are no longer dealing with the legendary Pāṇṭiyas of *Caṅkam* times, but a young dynasty ascending to power and seeking reconnection with past glory and cultural restitution; in some 9th- and 10th-century copper-plate grants, they ascribe to their as yet nameless forefathers the setting up of a Tamil academy (*Caṅkam*) in Maturai[21] and a translation of the *Mahābhārata* into Tamil.[22] Moreover, the colophons of some anthologies name the Pāṇṭiya kings that were patrons for their compilation.[23] Corroboration comes from an unexpected side, namely from the *Tēvāram*, the 7th-century main work of the devotional Tamil Śaiva canon, a text basically focused on the Cōḻa region and not at all concerned with Maturai. There we find in one stanza Śiva praised as *am taṇ maturai tokai ākkiṉāṉ*, "he who brought into being the anthologies in beautiful cool Maturai" (*Tēv.*

3.54.11).[24]

Tokai is the traditional designation of a *Caṅkam* anthology, as seen in the name of the later hyper-anthology called *Eṭṭuttokai*. Maturai is the legendary town of the academy and the seat of the Pāṇṭiyas. All versions of the later *Caṅkam* legend make the god Śiva into a founder and patron of the literary academy in Maturai, a development that will be discussed in great detail in chapter IV. Thus our slightly elliptical *Tēvāram* verse can be read as a first testimony for the Śaivaisation of the *Caṅkam* tradition, which would become so prominent in the transmission of the second millennium. A 7th-century date for such an allusion is surprisingly early, since no datable evidence of a *Caṅkam* legend involving the agency of Śiva on Pāṇṭiya side is found before the 9th century.[25] Inside the *Tēvaram*, however, this verse is not completely isolated, as will be seen in chapter III.4.3, which deals with the integration of the *Caṅkam* into the Śaiva corpus.

Going back to the anthologies and their invocation stanzas, the anthologies with the oldest core are, on the Akam side, the already mentioned *Kuṟuntokai*, the *Naṟṟiṇai* and the *Akanāṉūṟu*, the collections with short, medium and long love poems. Their heroic counterpart is the *Puṟanāṉūṟu*. While the *Kuṟuntokai* and *Naṟṟiṇai* are largely homogenous (although both also contain later poems), both the *Akanāṉūṟu* and *Puṟanāṉūṟu* include a lot of evidently later material. One reason for this might have been the difficulty involved in transmitting long poems through the centuries intact, in other words, new material had to be added in order to arrive at the standard number of four hundred poems. Two further anthologies are close in content and form to the four already enumerated, though from the aspect of language and thematic development they must be considered further advanced,[26] namely the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* (five hundred very short love poems) and the *Patiṟṟuppattu* (once ten decades of heroic poems, of which eight have survived). These two anthologies were not originally Pāṇṭiya texts, but Cēra, as we are taught in one case by the colophon, in the other by the fact that the text sings exclusively about Cēra kings.[27] Since the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*, too, is furnished with an invocation verse by Peruntēvaṉār, the conclusion at hand is that these verses signal the existence of a first hyper-anthology that stood under Pāṇṭiya aegis, as is claimed by the tradition for the later *Eṭṭuttokai*. It is true that in the case of the *Patiṟṟuppattu* the beginning and end are missing and so are both the invocation verse and the colophon, but it is so close to the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* in language and style that one can argue for the hypothesis that there was once such a verse and that the *Patiṟṟuppattu* was also part of a preliminary collection of six texts.[28]

Until here there is no reason at all to suspect that these six texts were associated with two others that share in part a number of conventions but that, from the point of view of their contents,

language and form, are not really close. The *Kalittokai* (a collection of a hundred and fifty love poems in Kali metre) and the *Paripāṭal* (a collection of originally seventy poems in mixed metre named Paripāṭal, of which twenty-two and some fragments have survived) are linked by the fact that they are the first texts whose names are based on their metre. They also share a limitation of their geographic horizon, for the most part the region of the Pāṇṭiyas, as well as a number of linguistic innovations, such as the first plural forms in *-kaḷ* or the negative absolutive in *-āmal*.[29]

Moreover they are often mentioned together as a pair in the poetological tradition. [30] It is only in the first version of the narration that became famous as the *Caṅkam* legend – the story of the three successive literary academies (*Caṅkam*) at the Pāṇṭiya court in Maturai – that all eight texts contained in today's *Eṭṭuttokai* are listed together in one row. This legend is found recounted for the first time in a supplement to the preamble of one of the oldest poetological commentaries, namely Nakkīraṉ on the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ*, in perhaps the 11th century.[31] While, according to this version, the literary production of the first two academies was lost except for the grammatical treatise known as *Tolkāppiyam*, our eight texts are listed as survivors from the third academy. All of this might indicate that, in fact, the *Kalittokai* and *Paripāṭal* were products of the revival movement that by some has been called the first Tamil Renaissance,[32] the restoration of literary activities at the Pāṇṭiya court, which led to the anthologisation of the earlier works and which, incidentally, is also attested in works such as the *Pāṇṭikkōvai*.[33] The name of the hyper-anthology that is current today, i.e. *Eṭṭuttokai*, is attested even later, namely for the first time in the reverse form *tokaiyeṭṭu* in Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar's commentary on the *Ceyyuḷiyal* of the *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram* (on *TPn* 236), in about the 14th century.

Even less certain is the genesis of the second hyper-anthology, the *Pattuppāṭṭu*. In the absence of text-critical groundwork, the sequence of songs that is suggested in Table 1 can only be regarded as a very vague preliminary attempt.[34] It is clear that the Ten Songs differ widely from each other and thus cannot really be attributed to one and the same period. Scholars have long agreed on putting the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, the only text that is devotional in character, at the end of the series. All in all, however, it has to be stated that, in spite of deviating in genre, the songs show a greater affinity to the earlier six anthologies than to the two later ones, especially with respect to metre, still the old Akaval. Metre is one of the preconditions for the continuation of the formulaic repertoire.[35]

The colophons that follow each individual song, and not the anthology as such, associate the texts either with one of the old houses Cōḻa or Pāṇṭiya, or with a few smaller chiefs. They are mentioned, however, not as sponsors but as addressees. It is not clear who was responsible for compiling the ten separate texts into

one collection. Their commentator, Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar, hails from Maturai, that is, the Pāṇṭiya region, but this is a testimony only from the 14th century. In the already mentioned enumeration of texts from the third *Caṅkam*, the Ten Songs are absent.[36]

The name *Pattuppāṭṭu* for the hyper-anthology is attested for the first time in a poetological commentary of the 11th century, namely Iḷampūraṇar on *TPi* 459. From the 12th century onwards we find in the same commentary tradition the dual designation *pāṭṭum tokaiyum*, "Songs and Anthologies" (Pērāciriyar on *TPp* 392 and 649), referring very probably to our two big collections. The commentary tradition of the *Tolkāppiyam* is confirmed by that of the *Naṉṉūl*, a 12th-century grammatical treatise. Mayilainātar on *Naṉṉūl* 387, perhaps slightly earlier than Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar, enumerates as works, or rather corpora, of literature (*ilakkiyam*): the Five Great *kāvyas* (*aimperuṅkāppiyam*), the Eight Great Anthologies (*eṇperuttokai*), the Ten Songs (*pattuppāṭṭu*), and the Eighteen Minor Works (*patiṉeṇkīḻkkaṇakku*).[37] The variations in these titles seem to show that the texts as such were known, and, judging from the numerous quotations found in the commentaries, roughly in the form that is known to us today. Nonetheless, the texts' designations were still fluid.[38]

I.2.2 Its Fate

If we want to establish the transmission history for the corpus through the second millennium, we cannot exactly complain about a lack of sources (of which many are still not very securely dated), but they are not the sources one would like to see in every respect. Direct textual evidence is almost completely absent.[39] None of the manuscripts that can still be found can be dated earlier than perhaps the late 17th century; we do not even know whether our texts were notated from the beginning in Tamil script, although thanks to numerous literary references we can be fairly certain that the medium of transmission was already the palmleaf manuscript. If one accepts that the earliest indication for a compilation and written fixation of single anthologies, i.e., the original invocation stanza of the *Kuṟuntokai*, points to the late 5th century, there are two possibilities for the original script, namely besides Tamil also Vaṭṭeḻuttu, attested in inscriptions all over the area up to the 8th century (one might take as an example the Pāṇṭiya Vēḷvikkuṭi copper-plate grant) and in Kerala even far beyond that date. To be sure, a hypothetical later change from Vatteḻuttu to the Tamil script of the manuscripts still extant would be about comparable to the European switch from majuscule to minuscule. As such one would expect it to have left major traces in the material by the way of characteristic copying mistakes.[40] However, an investigation into this has yet to see the light of day.

We are thrown back on indirect textual evidence from commentaries and various types of literature, especially puranic literature. By the turn of the first millennium the development of an exegetical tradition was already well on its way. The compilation of the corpus had been completed, the invocation stanzas had been written, and probably some of the texts composed in emulation had been integrated into it. The subsequent arrangement into hyper-anthologies was accompanied by two other traditions: on the one hand, the emergence of a twofold commentary tradition,[41] one literary and the other grammatical, and on the other hand, by a sort of secondary life for the collection in the form of a fluid set of legends connected with the literary academy or academies (*Caṅkam*) at the Pāṇṭiya court in Maturai. This is attested in a wide-ranging body of secular and religious literature from about the 7th to the 19th centuries; indeed, such legends are still being spun forth today.

The grammatical tradition mentioned above that developed parallel to the literary one was an important aspect. Grammar, in Tamil *ilakkaṇam*, has been, just as in the case of Sanskrit *vyākaraṇa*, one of the most fruitful theoretical domains in the Tamil sphere. But unlike its sister tradition, *vyākaraṇa,* it comprises not only phonetics (*eḻuttu*) and morphology, syntax and semantics (*col*), but also poetics (*poruḷ*), part of which is metrics (*ceyyuḷ*, later *yāppu,* which became an independent discipline by about the 9th century). Still later, a fifth sub-discipline emancipates itself from poetics, namely *aṇi*, the theory of poetic embellishments, a counterpart to Sanskrit *alaṅkāra*.[42] The oldest transmitted treatise on threefold grammar is the above-mentioned *Tolkāppiyam*. Although its linguistic presentation of Tamil does not concur in every respect with the language we find in the anthologies (Natarajan 1977), at the latest the third part, poetics (*poruḷ*), clearly describes many conventions that are mirrored in poetry. Another treatise of immediate relevance here is the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ* referred to above, a small specialised grammar only on Akam poetics.

The first obvious links between poetry and poetics are, in the case of Akam, the so-called *kiḷavi*-s, literally the “speech[-situations]”, that is, a sort of miniature commentary attached to each individual poem. The basic information they contain pertains to the speaker, listener(s) and the occasion of the poem. Thus they can be seen as the beginning of an exegetical tradition, and indeed they have something to tell about the developing relationship between theory and practice, which also has an impact on chronology.[43] However, their textual history is complex, just as that of the treatises they make use of. First of all, we can discern three distinct groups of *kiḷavi*-s, namely those of the three old Akam anthologies *Kuṟuntokai*, *Naṟṟiṇai* (*NA*) and *Akanāṉūṟu* (*AN*), those of the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*, and those of the *Kalittokai*.[44]

The first group is the least homogenous, and matters are

complicated by the fact that *kiḷavi*-s seem to have been treated with a considerable amount of liberty even by the late copyists: often *kiḷavi*-s differ in various manuscripts, not only in the phrases themselves but also in the general interpretation of the poem's situation. Sometimes such differences of opinion have been preserved in the form of double (in rare cases even triple) *kiḷavi*-s, though some of the double occurrences in the modern editions might go back to the editor's perusal of deviating manuscripts. [45] Now, what makes them so interesting is the fact that they participate in the poetological idiom, and also the fact that there is a set of exegetical phrases common to the *kiḷavi*-s, the *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram* (*TP*) and the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ* (*IA*).[46] This repertoire might go back to a period before the first fixation of the treatises, perhaps around the 5th to early 6th centuries.[47] However, both *kiḷavi*-s and treatises grow. While the supposedly oldest specimens consist in brief phrasal clauses that really only name the speaker (say, the girl), the listener (the confidante) and the occasion (long-term separation), later layers tend to be longer and occasionally make it possible to identify the exact line of aphorism in one of the treatises which they rely on, in other words, there is a movement from a common set of phrases to exact quotations. It is this layer that clearly presupposes the existence of written treatises being used for reference. An even later layer, far less frequent in number, is even longer, often comprising several lines. Here we do not find only a poetological embedding, but also first minimal paraphrases of the contents of the poem, which foreshadows the elaborate *kiḷavi*-s of the *Kalittokai*.

Interesting to note also is that *kiḷavi*-s are, apart from rare exceptions, free of any reference to *tiṇai*.[48] It is reasonable to suppose that endowing a poem with a *kiḷavi* had become customary at some point before the hyper-anthologisation, because otherwise it would be difficult to account for the intrinsic differences between the groups that also correspond to our layers of text. Likewise, had the bulk of the *kiḷavi*-s only been written at the time Peruntēvaṉār's invocation stanzas were added, that is, at the point of first putting together a group of anthologies, one would expect the *kiḷavi*-s of the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* not to be different from those of the three older Akam texts. As it is, one would expect that the distinct group of *KT*, *NA*, and *AN*, i.e. the old Pāṇṭiya collections, already had rudimentary *kiḷavi*-s at the time of their compilation and that the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* followed suit when it was added to the corpus, let us say in the early 7th century. It is quite close to the three earlier ones, but is adjusted to the decade principle[49] and uses a number of terms not found in any of the other three. Slightly more tricky is the *Kalittokai*. Usage of the same group of phrases can still be observed, but on the whole its *kiḷavi*-s correspond only to the long and elaborate type that is very rare in the earlier set. In fact they may have been written at any time between the *Kali*'s composition and the commentary period. I would

think it likely that the commentator, Nacciṉārkkiyar, elaborates on material that had already been transmitted.

Similar traditions exist for the Puṟam poems, although on the whole they give the impression of being later and more systematised. The *Puṟanāṉūṟu* does not only come with a specification of *tiṇai*,[50] but also with a *tuṟai*, a short phrasal notation of a sub-theme belonging to a particular *tiṇai*. This is followed by the names of the king being sung and the poet who is singing. The *Patiṟṟuppattu* is even more elaborate in this respect, adding prosodic categories to the *tuṟai* and, to the decade, a *patikam* that elucidates the historical context and adds notes about the life and exploits of the respective king.[51] The age and the pertinence of this ancillary material for historical studies on the period have been debated.[52]

One short paragraph has to be devoted here to the Tamil tradition of literary commentaries, whose role in the transmission of the corpus will be discussed in connection with the transition from manuscript to print (chapter IV.2). The literary commentaries are reputed to have started considerably later than the theoretical ones, namely, in the 12th century. All the ones linked to the *Caṅkam* corpus are supposed to have been produced in the peak period before the 15th century.[53] This tenet, however, seems dubious, in the light of manuscript evidence. Anyway, for a large portion of the corpus no commentary prior to the 19th century revival period is available in print. Old anonymous commentaries exist for part of the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* (1–250), *Akanāṉūṟu* (1–90) and *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* (300 selected verses out of 500), as well as for the *Patiṟṟuppattu*. *Paripāṭal* has been commented on by Parimēlaḻakar (13th c.), the *Kalittokai* and *Pattuppāṭṭu* by Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar. The only *Caṅkam* text to have received more than one commentary is the first song of the *Pattuppāṭṭu*, the devotional *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, with as many as five printed commentaries and a great deal of unpublished material (see II.1.1.3).

While the theoretical texts give only an indirect testimony of the existence of the *Caṅkam* corpus,[54] the commentaries on them that began to be written by the end of the first millennium, make, as we have already seen at the end of the last section, explicit reference to them, as single texts, as corpora of texts and as genres of literature. These references range from the earliest commentary on poetics, Nakkīraṉ on the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ*, before the end of the first millennium, right up to the early 18th-century *Ilakkaṇakkottu*. That these references, for the better part, were more than mere lip-service or hear-say is attested by the thousands of quotations from classical poems that are found in the commentaries, meant to illustrate the poetic rules enunciated by the treatise and/or used by the commentators in their arguments about the interpretation of those rules. Again, these quotations start with Nakkīraṉ, spread from poetics through the whole range of grammatical literature, and reach their high tide between the 11th and 14th century. After the peak of

Nacciṉārkkiṉar on the *Tolkāppiyam* the number of quotations decreases, but even in the commentary on the last of the great fivefold grammars, Vaittiyanāta Tēcikar's *Iḷakkaṇa Viḷakkam* of the 17th century, several hundred *Caṅkam* poems are still quoted (for details, see chapter III.5.1).

To be sure, other texts besides the *Caṅkam* classics and their immediate successors found entry into the commentaries. But a look at the figures shows that, with two exceptions, for the bulk of the tradition such quotations were fairly negligible. Already the minor classics are, apart from the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* with its handy short distiches, far less prominent than the *Caṅkam* texts. A certain presence has to be attributed to the epic texts in the wider sense. The whole of devotional literature, beginning with the Tamil bhakti corpora of the first millennium (the twelve Śaiva *Tirumuṟai* and the four thousand Vaiṣṇava *Tivyappirapantam*) is practically absent from the commentaries.[55] As for the *pirapantam* genres (from Sanskrit *prabandha-*, "composition"), a voluminous list of mostly smaller literary genres painstakingly described in the later *Pāṭṭiyal* grammars, some of them are quoted in small numbers, but the only important one among them is the *Kōvai*. As a genre its life span ranges from about the 8th or 9th to the 19th century.[56] It is an Akam-Puṟam poem (often) in four hundred stanzas, in which every verse praises the patron (a king or god or even a revered poet colleague; thus Puṟam) while at the same time it recounts the love relationship of a poetic couple as a sort of serialised verse drama (thus Akam). Since it was supposed to contain every single speech situation conceived of by the theoreticians, in a sequence canonised with the *Nampi Akapporuḷ* in the 13th century, the *Kōvai* was early on perceived as the ideal candidate for illustrative purposes. Some *Kōvais* probably were written with that intent. Thus often a single commentary may give several hundred quotations from a single *Kōvai*, because most or even all the stanzas were applicable.

It is the other exception that reminds us of the caution necessary in drawing any conclusions from the material at our disposal, namely the anonymous poems, verses from works that have been lost, of which very often not even the title has been transmitted.[57] In addition to the *Caṅkam* classics and the *Kōvais* they constitute the biggest part in any statistics of quotations. The exact figure is impossible to glean at the moment, because very often the same or similar verses have been handed down from commentary to commentary, and thus adding up the figures from the different texts would give us only the overall number of times they have been used, not the actual number of additional poems (and some come from longer, epic texts, such as the Tamil *Pāratam* – the *Mahābhārata* – not from single-verse anthologies). Still one would roughly guess them to be more than a thousand in number, which might represent a corpus or corpora just as big or bigger than the one that has been preserved.

However, the pride of place given to the *Caṅkam* works in such a great number of commentaries over such a long time span justifies the conjecture that, in a canon of classical Tamil literature, they were given a very prominent position. This fact has recently been contested by Venkatachalapathy (2006), who justly reminds us of the contingency of canon as a category and who claims that the position held by the *Caṅkam* today is concomitant to its resurrection in the 19th century and due, among other things, to the role it came to play in Tamil identity politics. The real Tamil canon before the renaissance would have comprised mostly religious and didactic works. While this is very true, it holds good only for the period immediately preceding the Tamil Renaissance, possibly the 15th to 17th centuries and definitely the 18th century. What happened in this period?

Occasionally we hear voices of criticism against the grammarians' one-sided emphasis on the classical heritage. The first text disclaiming the corpus, at least implicitly, that has come to my knowledge is the late 14th-century Kerala grammar *Līlātilakam*, written in Sanskrit, the founding text of the Malayāḷam grammatical tradition, although the word *malayāḷam* is not yet used as a designation of the language.[58] There *Pattuppāṭṭu* and *Eṭṭuttokai* appear to be subsumed under what is called the Cōḻa and Pāṇṭiya language (*bhāṣā*), with the implication that they are not of concern for the language of Kerala, a view that seems by and large to have been shared by scholars in Kerala up to this day. For the most part, they have not put forward the *Caṅkam* corpus as their legitimate heritage, to which they would have been every bit as entitled as the Tamilians. Better known is the late Śaiva advice against reading earlier secular literature found in the commentary on the *Ilakkaṇakkottu*. That attitude, however, did not induce its author to remove the admittedly small number of fragmentary *Caṅkam* quotations from his commentary, all of which had been handed down as standard examples in grammatical literature.[59]

What is true is that enthusiasm seems to be waning from the 15th century onwards. Apart from a thin trickle of standard examples in the commentaries on grammar in the strict sense, that is, excluding poetics, the main testimony for the active mastery of our poems is the already mentioned commentary on the *Ilakkaṇa Viḷakkam*. There is one more source, though of a somewhat different category, namely the *Puṟattiraṭṭu*, a collection of older poems mostly dealing with moral issues, brought together from a wide range of sources, to begin with the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* (of which alone it quotes more than a hundred verses), the *Patiṟṟuppattu* and the *Paripāṭal*, continues with quite a number of quotations from the *Kīḻkkaṇakku*, epics, and several lost texts otherwise known only from commentary quotations,[60] and ends with *Kampaṉ* (12th c.), dated by its first editor, Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai (1938), to the late 15th century.

It is these centuries of relative dearth that are the heyday of yet

another type of source, namely the legends. Their well-explored starting point was the founding legend of the Tamil literary tradition, the oft-repeated story of the three successive academies, called *Caṅkam*, at the court of the Pāṇṭiyas in Maturai. The third of these is said to have produced, among other works, the texts of today's *Eṭṭuttokai*. Already in its first narrative version, in the preamble to Nakkīraṉ's commentary on the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ* (10th/11th c.?), the originally secular tradition appears to have been absorbed into the sectarian Śaiva fold.

The centuries after this spin out the story of the academy in Maturai, under the aegis of Śiva himself, into a series of distinct episodes mostly concerned with the exploits of particular academy poets.[61] That already before the turn of the millennium the *Caṅkam* as such had become a literary topos is indicated by a curious bit of evidence provided by the earliest *Nikaṇṭu* (a lexicon of synonyms, that is, a thesaurus, for the use of poets), the *Tivākaram*, where under 2.12 we find "the academy" (*Caṅkam*) enumerated among the various words used to refer to poet-scholars (*pulavar)*. The first traces of legendary episodes are already found in the *Tēvāram*, the most important Śaiva bhakti collection. As well, three of the well-known poets from earlier times, Kapilar, Paraṇar and Nakkīraṉ, even have second lives as producers of devotional poems that have been incorporated into the 11th *Tirumuṟai*, the last-but-one book in the Śaiva canon, containing miscellaneous material. The only old poem that has found entry there is the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, a poem in praise of lord Murukaṉ who is the son of Śiva, first of the *Pattuppāṭṭu*. It is ascribed to Nakkīraṉ (not the commentator, but the tradition begins to mix up the two). The body of poets from the academy has even been celebrated as one of the group of Nāyaṉmārs, the Śaiva saints, as is attested in Nampi Āṇṭār Nampi's *Tirutoṇṭarantāti* (11th c.), where the academy is still located in Maturai, as well as in the *Periyapurāṇam* (*PP*; 12th c.), where the seat of the academy is no longer named. A number of episodes is mentioned in the *Kallāṭam* (12th c.), an Akam poem that contains the first transmitted version of what is known as the sixty-four sports of Śiva in Maturai.[62]

The first fullfledged narrative about Śiva in the temples of that city and the Pāṇṭiyas who rule it, then, is Puliyūr Nampi's *Tiruviḷaiyāṭaṟpurāṇam* (somewhere between the 12th and the 14th centuries?), followed by the first Sanskrit adaptation in the *Hālāsya Māhātmya* (15th c.?), in its turn followed by the second *Tiruviḷaiyāṭaṟpuṟaṇam*, that of Parañcōti (17th c.). In all three texts, no less than six episodes of the sixty-four are connected with the *Caṅkam*, and the only new poet figure that makes an appearance is Iṭaikkāṭaṉ (possibly a poet whose lost work is quoted in the *Yāpparuṅkala Virutti*[63]). Still based on the same set is the poetically much more sophisticated abridged version of Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita (17th c.), again in Sanskrit. Remnants of yet another Tamil version are

contained in the fragmentary *Cuntarapāṇṭiyam* (17th c.).[64] A late prose version of Nakkīraṉ's encounter with Śiva, deviating in some details from the established template, is found in the *Cīkāḷatti Purāṇam*.[65] The narrative richness and freedom show more than anything else that the original, literary *Caṅkam* had become the stuff legends are made of, retold and elaborated on for their own sake, but no longer connected to a real and legible (or even remembered) body of literature.[66]

As for the 18th century and early 19th century, sources seem to fade out, unless we surmise that yet another strand of the legend was elaborated in that period, namely the one centred on Tiruvaḷḷuvar, the author of the *Kuṟaḷ*, and how he was received into the fold of the academy (see chapter III.4.5). This branch of the legends is attested mainly in several 19th-century accounts in English, based on oral accounts preserved in the Mackenzie collection (Blackburn 2000), one of the earliest being Wilson 1882 [1828], though a germ of it seems already contained in the *Kallāṭam* and the *Tiruvaḷḷuva Mālai*. There is a Tamil version possibly going back to the 18th century that I could recently photograph, the *Maturaic Caṅkattār Carittiram*, a manuscript preserved in paper form in the Government Oriental Manuscript Library in Ceṉṉai (GOML R.977), going back to the Mackenzie collection.

However, by now we are in possession of a different type of source, one that provides a much more direct type of evidence, namely the manuscripts. Older than most surviving specimens are some lists of texts that were received, copied and studied by a small number of missionaries in South India, the most prominent among them being Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg (1682–1719), who left behind a "Bibliotheca Malabarica" with some 119 entries. Among them figure a *Tolkāppiyam* and a *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, but not a single *Caṅkam* text. Sadly, in consequence of his untimely death, a common story, almost all of his manuscripts were lost or destroyed.[67]

Nevertheless, we still have a number of actual *Caṅkam* manuscripts, and these bear witness not only to the texts themselves, but also to intermittent work on the text in the form of, for one thing, glosses and rudimentary commentaries. This shows that the art of writing commentaries was not dead. They also come with colophons, and in the colophons we often find mnemonic stanzas preserving information that is useful or even necessary for reading the texts (chapter III.3). If they were not produced during the period in question, at least they were still memorised and handed on with the text. The sheer number of witnesses that have survived up to our days and the even higher numbers that are testified to by descriptions in the early editions clearly show that tradition, if dormant, cannot have been all dead, although the protagonists of the revival movement give a vivid picture of the hazards involved.

I.3 Research History and Programme

The period of rediscovering early classical Tamil literature in the second half of the 19th century, which coincided with the first philological "*Erschließung*" of the corpus and its language, can be presented as an early phase of research history; at the same time it remains an independent topic for historical research with which recent historical scholarship has been concerned. "It is my contention that the 'rediscovery' concept has been overemphasized while engaging with the question of the reproduction of [the] Sangam corpus in the late 19th century, and it is essential to understand how these texts were preserved and transmitted in the Tamil literary tradition before it was put into print. It is pertinent to take a long-term historical understanding of this process, which then necessitates an enquiry into canon formation and anthologization," writes Rajesh (2008: 134; repeated in Rajesh 2013: 22).

The current study hopes to shed fresh light on this topic from a philologist's perspective: On the one hand this will be done by seriously examining the wealth of premodern sources, as have been enumerated in the preceding sections. Many of these have hardly been taken into account, mostly because so many texts are no longer read. On the other hand it will go back to those sources that actually bear witness to the process of decipherment, the physical manuscripts, on palmleaf and on paper. This task would be impossible for anybody who is not an editor and has not, so to speak, crossed by foot at least some of the expanses of textual material.

I.3.1 The Tamil Renaissance of the Late 19th Century

As we have seen, by the early 19th century at the latest the academy in Maturai had become a half-remembered story.[68] The actual *Caṅkam* texts had gradually vanished from public consciousness, although there must have been some transmissional niches, which we will come to in time. In order to understand the significance of the events that opened the period called the "Tamil Renaissance", however, it is necessary to look at the situation – political, social and cultural – of Tamilnadu in the middle of the 19th century when this literature was re-discovered with much excitement. As anywhere in India, and not only India, this was a transitional period into modernity, partly furthered or even enforced, and partly obstructed by a colonial government. For the majority of Tamil speakers in what was known as the Madras presidency, the conflict took a special shape, since they had to hold their own not only against the British, but also against what was perceived as the overwhelming influence of the Indian North. To put it in a nutshell, the political and economic power was in the hands of the British colonial government. A significant part of the moral-religious power had gone over from the

Śaiva *mutts* into Christian hands, insofar as they were the mouthpiece of the rulers. In other words, they had the power of discourse. This is a point of extreme importance. Although Christianisation in Southern India, as in India in general, was only moderately successful, the missionaries are key figures in the discourse. The beginnings of Dravidian philology and almost all the early dictionaries and grammars were undertaken by them. This is why their expectations, their criticism, and their perception could shape the nascent Tamil understanding of what is Tamil and Tamilian so fundamentally. The first description of a Dravidian family of languages comes from the hand of F. W. Ellis [1819].[69] In general historical consciousness, however, the ground-breaking formulation goes back to Bishop Caldwell and his first *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Family of Languages* (1856).[70] The third force experienced as a foreign element were the Brahmins, guardians of the North Indian, Sanskrit-oriented, let us call it “high religion and culture”, and moreover, because of their education and position in the system, they were often seen as collaborators with the British.

It is in this phase of fermenting forces that the Tamil Renaissance takes place, the official rediscovery of the oldest Tamil literature, that which is now called “classical”.[71] Of course there is a political dimension to this whole process. It is closely connected with the emergence of the Tamil nationalist movement and the “pure Tamil” movement (Arooran 1980). However when speaking of Tamil intellectual history, one must also mention that in this period, thanks to the introduction of the printing press and the entirely new possibilities of dissemination it brought, ideas of social modernisation were being developed along with new literary genres and a new style of Tamil prose (Blackburn 2003, Ebeling 2010, Venkatachalapathy 2012). But at the same time a part of the Tamil intelligentsia was occupied with the arduous task of searching for and deciphering odd bundles of palm-leaf manuscripts.[72] They were struggling to find the entry into a hermetic and in parts even linguistically nearly incomprehensible universe, a universe they discovered and/or declared to be Tamil’s own. Suddenly Tamil history appeared to have tangible documents of what so far had been a legendary past. It was a past not only of literary excellence, but of a Pre-Indo-Aryan, autochthonous Tamil culture. Perhaps the most important text in this connection is the *Puṟanāṉūṟu*, the collection of heroic songs about the deeds of the kings from the three great Tamil dynasties, the Cēra, the Cōḻa and the Pāṇṭiya. History has been rewritten and royal genealogies have been created on the basis of these poems.

One of the most curious instances of amalgamation between the two currents of modernisation and resurrection is the connection of the oldest *Caṅkam* legend, the one about the three academies of the Pāṇṭiyas of which two were taken by a flood, with the European theorem from the natural sciences about Lemuria, the lost land

bridge between Africa and India.[73] This is how Lemuria became the lost homeland of the Pāṇṭiya kings, another Atlantis to be mourned and to be searched for. To be sure, it was not the textual scholars like Cāminātaiyar, nor the historians of the first generation like Kanakasabhai[74] who introduced what is today part of the curriculum in Tamil primary education.

Parallel to the gradual transition from a manuscript culture into one of printed texts, we can observe a transformation in the perception of knowledge and its transmission, tangible in the education and status of its transmitters. This was in part a surprisingly asymmetrical development. At the outset of the 19th century, the idea of a scholar is still encapsulated in the ancient concept of the *pulavar*, the scholar-poet who was sponsored by a court or temple and who produced highly sophisticated poetic works of praise (both worldly and religious), following conventions that had been established over centuries. His literary goal was an oral performance in front of an audience – a manuscript was to him an *aide-mémoire* – and he had a number of apprentices or students following him whom he instructed in the art of their trade. A *pulavar* was constantly on the move and on the lookout for support, until he was fortunate (or famous) enough to receive a permanent position in a monastery or at a court. Older literature was taught as a basic fund of erudition and a model for further production. Of this literature, only certain texts were performed, such as the *Kampa Rāmāyaṇam*, and for religious rather than literary reasons. It is this background that explains why knowing a text meant knowing a text by heart.[75]

The other end of the development, visible by the beginning of the 20th century, although by no means pervasive, is represented by the modern academic culture based on books and university education. In a transitional phase pandits, the Sanskritised – predominantly erudite and no longer productive – version of the *pulavar*, were appointed to colonial institutions such as Fort St. George in Madras, which in its turn became the embryo for Madras University (Ebeling 2009b). Colonial ideas about native scholarship were strongly influenced by Brahmin-based northern traditions. Little is known about the status of mere scholars, say grammarians, in the early period. One such person is U.Vē. Cāminātaiyar (1855–1942), who came from a family of performing musicians and was a pupil of the famous *pulavar* Mīṉāṭcicuntaram Piḷḷai. He himself however became a collector of manuscripts and an editor, i.e. a textual scholar. He was in the service of the monastery of Tiruvāvaṭuturai, known as the Tiruvāvaṭuturai *mutt*,[76] before taking a teaching post at Kumpakōṇam College in 1880. The background of this legacy was oral performance, however, and so mastering a text was coextensive with memorising a text. Thus, retrieving the lost literary heritage took the form of recommitting it to memory, in which books merely played the role of a more convenient type of manuscript. Until today, this

form of scholarship, surviving in niches of financial independence, some libraries, and rare postcolonial institutions such as the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient in Pondicherry, is the most prestigious in Tamilnadu, although it is dying out quickly.[77]

Leaving aside sentiment and ideology, the facts seem roughly to be the following: By the early 19th century, the bulk of early Tamil literature (i.e. the *Caṅkam* corpus itself, the *Kīḻkkaṇakku* texts with the exception of *Tirukkuṟaḷ* and *Nālaṭiyār*, and to a less certain degree the early epics) had faded away from common consciousness (Venkatachalapathy 2006). For the better part of the 19th century the celebrated Tamil classics were the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* (a 6th-century collection of didactic verse) and the *Kampa Rāmāyaṇam* (a 12th-century poetic epic). Oblivion, however, cannot have been complete. In the grammatical tradition at least, fragments and quotations of individual poems had survived. And while it is certain that the early grammatical texts were also much less studied than before, here the number of surviving manuscripts is revelatory: while in the case of early literature usually between one and five manuscripts are still extant, in exceptional cases up to eighteen manuscripts, for the *Tolkāppiyam* (the earliest Tamil grammar) there are still more than a hundred.[78] Moreover the situation of texts with a religious affiliation was different. The Jain epic *Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi* was still read and taught in the Jain community, a fact Cāminātaiyar to his great astonishment and relief discovered at some point during his editing process, and his commentary benefited greatly from the instruction he received.[79]

Also a brief look at early printing history seems to relativise the picture. It remains true that the "Madras School of Orientalism", whose formation has recently received quite a lot of scholarly attention (Trautmann 2006 and 2009), does not seem to have been aware of the *Caṅkam* classics. The two great projects of that schoolwere the documentation of South Indian history by Colonel Mackenzie and his team, and the the college Fort St George, where Indian languages were taught to prospective British civil servants arriving in the colony. It was established in the year 1811 under the direction of F. W. Ellis in Madras. The college owned its own printing press and also collected manuscripts, printing, among other things, Tamil texts. Among the enormous mass of materials preserved in the Mackenzie collection (the basic stock of today's Government Oriental Manuscript Library in Ceṉṉai), not a single *Caṅkam* manuscript has been found. That collection represented the first systematic effort at locating and buying or copying palm-leaf manuscripts. This was done predominantly of those with historical value, but also of literary texts in South Indian languages (cf. catalogues Wilson 1882 [1828], Taylor 1835 and 1862, Mahalingam 1972). However, according to Murdoch (1968 [1865]: 93), at least one classic, namely the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, was known to Ellis, and the reprint's additional

notes list no less than four printed editions dating to before the turn of the 19th century.

A recent study, Rajesh 2013, asserts, on the basis of quotations in the notes to an unpublished translation of the first part (*aṟattup pāl* 1–12)[80] of the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* from the hand of Ellis, that the author must have known (and studied from palmleaf manuscript) "a wide array of Tamil works including classical works like *Purananuru, Patinenkilkanakku*, *Tolkappiyam, Cilappatikaram* and *Tirumurukarruppati* apart from works like *Civakacintamani, Cutamani, Kampa Ramayanam, Tiruvacakam* and numerous *Puranas*" (Rajesh 2013: 100 and 161). Even if quotations can be located, this conclusion is unfounded; in fact it seems more likely that Ellis perused one or even several of the impressive row of commentaries transmitted with the *Kuṟaḷ* that the pandits who worked for and with Ellis certainly had at their fingertips.[81] However, a certain confirmation underlaying the basic notion of Rajesh's claim that the classical texts were still around, comes, more than half a century later but still before the era of widespread publishing, in the form of a London manuscript of the *Kuṟuntokai* (BL Or.2726), a paper manuscript with a watermark dated to 1874 and with a colophon that states it had been copied in Maturai for A. C. Burnell. Burnell's signature proves that he had received the copy in 1878. What did he believe the *Kuṟuntokai* to be?[82]

In the same study Rajesh gives several tables listing Tamil books produced in the 19th century, among them those printed between 1834 and 1839 by the Kalviviḷakka Accukkūṭam in Madras (Rajesh 2013: 102 ff.; cf. Ebeling 2009b: 306). This list contains a *Tiruviḷaiyāṭaṟpurāṇam* (presumably that of Parañcōti, with its six chapters of *Caṅkam* stories), but also the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*.[83] A further set of tables (Rajesh 2013: 107 ff.) lists the editions of Āṟumukanāvalar[84] between 1851 and 1860, and after 1860. Among the books he printed before 1860 is the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai* with commentary, of which at least reprints are still available. One of the extant manuscripts professes to be a copy of that cherished edition (see chapter II.1.3.2, p. 81). More as a surprise comes the list of books after 1860, where we find not only twelve grammatical treatises, in fact the bulk of the early grammatical tradition beginning with the *Tolkāppiyam* and four of its commentaries, but also the three survivors of the five great epics (*Cilappatikāram*, *Maṇimēkalai* and *Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi*), a number of *Kīḻkkaṇakku*, starting with the *Kuṟaḷ*, and in addition two *Caṅkam* works proper, namely the *Kalittokai* with commentary and the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* with commentary. It is not clear whether any copy of these early prints has survived, but nonetheless both the manuscripts and reported editions seem to indicate that there was a certain awareness of the classical heritage by not only Indian but also Western scholars.

The first in the known series of *Caṅkam* first editions, then, is Tāmōtaram Piḷḷai[85] with the *Kalittokai* in 1887. Cāminātaiyar was the

scholar who prepared the greatest number of first editions; *Pattuppāṭṭu* in 1889, *Puṟanāṉūṟu* in 1894 and 1923 (after acquiring new manuscript material), *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* in 1903, *Patiṟṟuppattu* in 1904 and *Paripāṭal* in 1918. But there is a second reason that he received almost all the praise and all the fame, namely the fact that he grew to be very old and left behind a voluminous autobiography, entitled *Eṉ Carittiram* ("My Life"), which is still in print and has even been translated into English by Zvelebil (cf. Cāminātaiyar 1950). The three old Akam anthologies all came out in the early 20th century, namely the *Kuṟuntokai* with Cauripperumāl Arankaṉ[86] in 1915, the *Naṟṟiṇai* with Nārāyaṇacāmi Aiyar[87] in 1915, and the *Akanāṉūṟu* in two instalments, first *Kaḷiṟṟiyāṉainirai* with Rā. Irākavaiyaṅkār in 1918, and then *Maṇimiṭaipavaḷam* and *Nittilakkōvai* with Rā. Irākavaiyaṅkār and Rāja Gōpālāryaṉ in 1923/24.[88]

The extensive list of editors in the later history of *Caṅkam* editions lacks names connected to independent efforts at textual criticism. The *Kuṟuntokai* received repeated attention, with editions by Irāmarattiṉa Aiyar in 1930, Aruṇācala Tēcikar in 1933, Cāminātaiyar in 1937 and Rā. Irākavaiyaṅkār in 1946.[89] For the *Kalittokai*, there is Aṉantarāmaiyar 1925+1931, which includes two new manuscripts received from Cāminātaiyar. Otherwise the most important milestone is the edition of Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai[90] in 1940, a complete edition of the corpus where the poems are ordered according to the names of the poets. His work was continued in the complete edition of the corpus completed in the 1950s by a team of scholars under Es. Rājam, which edited the texts on the basis of the variants available in the editions printed until their day, while dissolving classical *sandhi* and metre in favour of word-by-word splits surrounded by European punctuation marks. Thus in some respects they created the first popular edition dispensing with a commentary. In 1943, Catāciva Aiyar revised the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* on the basis of one more manuscript. Beginning with the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* in 1947, Cu. Turaicāmip Piḷḷai edited several texts (*Patiṟṟuppattu* 1950, *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* 1957, and *Naṟṟiṇai* 1966+68) on the basis of so far unused manuscript material, without, however, specifying his sources in detail (and all of them seem to have vanished since). Finally in 1985, Mu. Caṇmukam Piḷḷai (Tañcāvūr) published the first and only professedly critical edition of a *Caṅkam* text, the *Kuṟuntokai*, actually a collation of the existing editions compared with one prominent additional manuscript.

In the course of the classicism debate and as a result of the plan announced by Cemmoḻi to publish "definitive editions"[91] of the classics, there has been renewed interest in the work done by the pioneers. This interest has borne fruit in a recent collective reprint of all the prefaces and introductions contained in the first editions (Ayyappaṉ 2009). This volume is extremely useful, even in cases in which the old editions are still in print, because, as it turns out, these reprints have been quite arbitrary as to what they did or did not

reproduce. It is thus now quite easy to follow what the early editors had to say about the editing process and the manuscripts at their disposal. What still seems to be overlooked, however, is the unique value held by the surviving manuscripts as testimonies of the editing process.

I.3.2 Tamil Manuscripts

The overall number of manuscripts transmitted in Tamilnadu can only be roughly estimated; what is clear however is that less than half of them are written in Tamil. Even in South India the Sanskrit tradition prevails, and of course there are also texts in other Dravidian languages such as Telugu, which at times was of considerable cultural and political impact. The materials are basically two, namely palm-leaf and paper. Cataloguing and preserving has been primarily restricted to the former category, which means that ready information on the number or the condition of paper manuscripts is not available, that is, outside the catalogues of individual libraries. According to the *Descriptive Catalogue of Palm-Leaf Manuscripts in Tamil* published in the 1990s by the Institute of Asian Studies, the overall number of Tamil palm-leaf manuscripts would seem to be around 25,000 (Hikosaka/Samuel 1980–98). Given the fact that today the Government Oriental Manuscript Library (GOML) in Ceṉṉai alone claims to have a collection of 16,000 Tamil manuscripts, the *Catalogue*'s figure can simply be dismissed as far too low. In any case, this catalogue comprises only some larger libraries and does not take into consideration the smaller collections of innumerable temples and private households. Among the big government libraries, large Tamil collections are also stored in the Caracuvati Makāl Library and the Tamil University, both in Tañcāvūr, as well as the Oriental Research Institute and Manuscript Library in Trivandrum (Kerala). The most important library for classical Tamil literature is the U. V. Swaminataiyar Library (UVSL) in Ceṉṉai (private but receiving government funding). But some of the bigger Śaiva monastic libraries are also of relevance, such as those in Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai and Tarumapuram, both in Tañcāvūr district. Extensive collections of Tamil Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava manuscripts are preserved, respectively, in the two French institutions in Pondicherry, the French Institute (IFP) and the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO).

A few thousand Tamil manuscripts have even found their way to Europe (James 1980). The German ones are part of a project involving the Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts (KOHD) in Germany; they are being catalogued in Cologne (the majority late Christian texts). London and Paris also possess collections. The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris has an inventory of about 900 manuscripts, some surprisingly documented only by means of a hand list not unlike the ones found in smaller Indian temples.

In recent years there have been several projects for cataloguing and conserving, but none of them is comprehensive. The IGNCA (the Indira Gandhi National Centre of Arts) has initiated extensive microfilming of palm-leaf manuscripts, but the quality is often questionable and gaining access not easy. Since the establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Classical Tamil ("Cemmoḻi") in the wake of Tamil's being declared the second classical language of India other than Sanskrit, manuscripts of (non-devotional) literature of the first millennium have been digitised. Another consequence of the new awareness of the importance of the classical heritage has been a public summons for donating manuscripts, mostly from private households. This has resulted in the discovery of many thousands of further manuscripts, of which until today few have been identified, let alone catalogued. Whole new libraries have been established to house these collections, such as the Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathy Visva Mahavidyalaya near Kāñcipuram.

One recent development is the comprehensive digitisation of complete library collections. Both the IFP and the EFEO in Pondicherry have announced that the photographing of their material is complete. Their collections consist of 8000 palm-leaf bundles of predominantly Śaiva texts and 1600 bundles of Vaṣṇava texts, both containing about 40 per cent Tamil material. The IFP collection is the first in Tamilnadu to be completely available online.[92] At both institutions, the work on descriptive catalogues has been going on for many years.

Precise information is difficult to come by. In addition to the already mentioned catalogue of the Institute of Asian Studies, there is another, published by the Tamil University (Chellamuthu et al. 1989–91), but in both of them it is not hard to find misleading and/or incomplete information. In part this is presumably not even due to carelessness on the part of the editors, but more likely something like natural erosion. The editors did not catalogue manuscripts as such, but the catalogues of manuscripts belonging to the different libraries, and some of these consist of handwritten lists transmitted over long periods of time. The larger libraries (such as GOML, Caracuvati Makāl and Tamil University) have their own ongoing projects of descriptive catalogues, although it is not always easy to see even the already published volumes. Conservation of course is a particularly serious problem under the conditions of the South Indian climate. Because of humidity and insects, manuscripts had to be copied roughly once every hundred years. After that length of time the first holes appeared and consequently, gaps in the text. This happened even if manuscripts were regularly cleaned and treated with lemon grass oil. Today the life expectancy of manuscripts can certainly be increased by keeping them in climate controlled conditions, but even so, it is not yet clear how long they can be maintained. A first positive step has been taken however: In India, too, the attitude towards these rich

materials is slowly changing. Not long ago a manuscript was thought obsolete as soon as its text was printed as a book. But nonetheless, this common notion is chiefly what explains the state of utter desolation and neglect one is still confronted with in many South Indian libraries.

The situation is even more alarming in the case of paper manuscripts. Paper slowly began to replace palm-leaf in the late 19th century, that is, in a period when printing had already been established. Despite this, great numbers of manuscripts still had to be quickly reproduced in order to prevent information from being lost. In smaller and more remote, i.e. poorer libraries, the practice of copying by hand was still alive well into the 1960s (and perhaps even beyond). Thus, paper manuscripts are important because they bear the only surviving testimony for older, disintegrated palm-leaves. Secondly, they convey the first traces of editing processes. The scribes often consulted more than one manuscript, noted variants or even collated, and they were in many cases the first to introduce a less ambiguous notation system. It is precisely for the second reason, however, that these paper manuscripts were not held in esteem. Since they were regarded as relics of an incomplete editing process, they were often not catalogued or integrated in any way into steps for preservation.

Given that manuscripts are still scattered far and wide, it is not possible to know how many *Caṅkam* manuscripts are still extant. After about ten years of searching, the *Caṅkam* project has located a total of 183 manuscripts, 132 on palmleaf and 51 on paper, of which 81 are of the *Eṭṭuttokai* and 102 of the *Pattuppāṭṭu*. For these figures, the collective manuscripts have been divided according to text. To be precise, 12 manuscripts have been seen or even used, but not yet copied. For Kolkatta, for example, permission to take photographs has not yet been received (with the exception of one *Akanāṉūṟu* copy). Full codicological descriptions are available from the UVSL and the GOML, both Ceṉṉai, for the Caracuvati Makāl Library in Tañcāvūr, as well as for Tiruvāvaṭuturai, but most of the others are just listed and at best briefly characterised. In any case, it is not easy to match what is found in the various catalogues with what is extant on the shelves. Manuscripts have vanished since the time the original lists were made, and they have been misplaced or misidentified. Even more hazardous is the task of relating the available manuscripts to the descriptions found in the early editions. The numbers of surviving manuscripts might not vary much from those mentioned by editors, but identity can be established with certainty for less than twenty per cent. In some cases, to be sure, the old description leaves no doubt that the physical object must have been destroyed. In some cases we know this, such as for the manuscripts of the Maturai Tamil *Caṅkam*, reported to have been lost in a fire. In other cases it is possible to judge from the editions that a manuscript has not yet been used for

an editing process.

Information about the provenance of the manuscripts is very hard to come by. Editors have often noted the name of the donor if a manuscript came from a private collection, but even if it were possible to find out more about these men (and many names recur several times), we can almost never be certain that we hold the very object in our hands which was donated so many years ago. Libraries such as the GOML occasionally provide at least the name of earlier collections that were integrated into their inventory at some point, but not even in the case of the UVSL can we establish which manuscripts truly go back to Cāminātaiyar's collection, or how and which ones were used for his editions.[93] Another casual source of information are the scribal colophons that come with some manuscripts; in the case of paper manuscripts these often take the place of a title and/ or cover page. The arduous process of describing, deciphering, sifting, matching and identifying, as well as the meagre results this has brought, has been documented in chapter II.

Vital for what they can tell us about transmission history are the traditional colophons, well known in their essentials and often reproduced, but not seen in the context of the material tradition they represent. They often incorporate another genre of small paratext. I call these mnemonic stanzas, stray verses that often encapsulate poetic or historiographic knowledge pertaining to the texts transmitted (see chapters III.2 and III.3). Many, but by no means all of them have been quoted in the introductions to the early editions (and some are today attested only there). But none of them is found in poeto-historiographical accounts such as the *Tamiḻ Nāvalar Caritai*. (How and by whom, then, were they preserved?) This takes us over the thin borderline between colophons and exegetical ancillary materials, glosses, word lists, and commentaries. These are found there in abundance, which clearly show that, however difficult the task of deciphering the manuscripts and transferring them into legible, printable texts, the early editors did not have to start from zero, or from a freshly acquired knowledge of the medieval commentary tradition. This is a point to which we will return.

The problems of reading the actual manuscripts begin with the fact that most of them are not dated, especially those on palm-leaves. As a rule both catalogues and editors are silent on the crucial point of dating. For the few manuscripts that have been taken to Europe, we usually know at least when they were included in which collection. Palaeography or codicology is virtually non-existent, and so the present study cannot hope to achieve much more than a few suggestions regarding the possible evolution of the script. This is particularly difficult because there are not many specimens and because we cannot rule out the possibility of mere regional variety or even idiosyncrasy. A little easier is the situation with respect to the paper manuscripts, for one thing because a number of them are

dated (although often not unequivocally), but also because here the development has led through several successive and clearly distinguishable stages.

The major problem of the palm-leaf notation is its ambiguity, which has already been well described and often bemoaned in the early editions. To summarise briefly: the dot above the letter that marks a consonantal cluster (*puḷḷi*) is not yet in use. There is a single graph (an open *kāl*) for long *ā* and intervocalic *r*. No distinction is made between short and long *e/ē* and *o/ō* (due to the fact that the double *kompu* is not employed). These features go hand in hand with the visual organisation of the letters on the leaf. The text is written in *scriptio continua*, without any split of metrical feet or lines (not to mention word split, which enters Tamil poetry only in the prints produced in the second half of the 20th century). The idea is clearly to have as much text as possible on the leaf, leaving only some space for margins left and right, above and below, as well as around the holes, because it is well known that these areas are the most vulnerable. If there are any navigation aids, they consist of marginal titles and intertitles, or sometimes an indication of the first metrical foot at the beginning of a new poem (*pratīka*). As a rule this is on the left side, because the right side corresponds to the right hand of a user turning the leaves while reading, and is thus doubly endangered. There is very little space for annotation or correction. In other words, a Tamil palm-leaf manuscript is primarily a high-density data storage device and an *aide mémoire* for somebody capable of reciting the text.

It is this fact that makes us understand one of the main functions of the paper manuscript, which is disambiguation. To be sure, a first generation of paper manuscripts exists in which the palm-leaf notation is merely transferred to another medium, one that is easier and faster to produce. For their production there were probably two reasons. One is that a palm-leaf source was not given as a gift to be kept and perused at leisure, but only allowed to be kept for comparison for a short while or even to be copied on the spot. The other is, that once collecting, editing, preserving and preventing further loss of precious information had come to be perceived as a necessary task, huge quantities of palm-leaves had to be recopied before they crumbled to pieces in the hands of their copyists.

Very soon, however, the advantages of paper copies came to be recognised. It is here, in the second generation, that we find experiments of separating lines and splitting metrical feet. I call them experiments, because we find the first attempts corrected over and again. Also diacritic marks such as the *puḷḷi* are introduced only gradually, also with quite a phase of trial and error. Paper also provided space for extensive annotation and for corrections and further readings between the lines, often presumably from other manuscripts. From a text-critical point of view, this procedure often

amounted to what one might call contamination: it is absolutely impossible to reconstruct the source(s) of a particular reading, or to know whether it is even a reading at all or in fact a correction. Some of the palm-leaf manuscripts now lost may not have been copied at all, but their deviations only noted down in another paper copy. The situation is hopeless in cases where the earlier palm-leaf sources are not preserved at all. But it is interesting and revealing in cases where both the palm-leaf and paper manuscripts survive, as in the case of the *Akanāṉūṟu*.

It was not long before the influence of printing was felt, and in the third generation of paper copies we see the beginnings of layout: space between the poems, and between *kiḷavi*, poem and author. The poem number becomes part of the heading, the commentary is sometimes set off, and there is even something like annotation.[94] Soon paper manuscripts begin to look like handwritten books, and some of them may even represent pre-print copies produced by editors (although there is no case where this is clearly indicated).

Also experiments with various modes of secondary text take place on paper. Firstly there are the so-called old commentaries, for which the breadth of transmission is quite variable; in some cases, especially for Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar, there are still up to ten manuscripts, while in others it is one or two, and for some bits of old commentary printed in the early editions, no manuscript witness has survived until today. Secondly, we find marginal glosses and even commentaries, most fragmentary. None of these are mentioned by the early editors, although they are probably either pieces of older commentaries that have been copied down from older palm-leaves or the fruit of the copyists' (who in some cases may have been editors) own attempts at understanding the text. Given the transmissional situation, with anonymous commentaries and even palm-leaf copies that cannot go back more than perhaps, at the very utmost, three hundred or three hundred and fifty years, I would rather believe that the "old" commentaries we see in print, especially the anonymous ones, are the outcome of the labours of generations of copyists and transmitters. In the light of the manuscript evidence, I think we will also have to re-qualify what we think we know about the neo-commentaries of the 19th century and their being modelled on their medieval predecessors, as has recently been expounded by Ebeling (2009a).[95] It is true is that for the early editors, writing a commentary in those cases where no older one was available was a duty on a par with that of producing the edition in the first place. But nonetheless there is reason to believe that when writing, they stood on the shoulders of their unnamed predecessors and that there was some continuity of tradition.

To summarise, chapter IV will deal with the precarious process of deciphering the palm-leaf notation via gradually more explicit versions of paper copies and on to the first printed editions. Based on

the author’s work of critically editing a subset of three texts (the *Kuṟuntokai*, *Naṟṟiṇai* and *Akanāṉūṟu*), the transmissional situation for these three anthologies will be presented and the strategies of a number of early editors will be discussed in detail. This will be rounded up by a shorter account of the these texts’ later publishing history. Three broad phases will be described, one of decipherment, one of standardisation and one of vulgarisation.

Put in a nutshell, the process can be explained by the material dependence of variants on the medium that is used to transmit the text: the less than perfect notation system for Tamil connected with the palm-leaf tradition causes large-scale ambiguity. The transition to writing manuscripts on paper goes hand in hand with a more precise script (which marks line and word breaks, consonantal clusters and vowel lengths). The consequence is a multiplication of variants, since everything that was ambiguous in the earlier notation can have two or even more transcripts. The opposite movement, then, can be observed in the early editions. Through processes of normalisation and standardisation, editors reduce the number of transmitted variants and exclude certain types (such as some of the regional variations). Contemporary editions, finally, do away with variants altogether and print only a single text, even if they do not yet claim it to be definitive.

II The Manuscripts

The first thing is to locate these innumerable manuscripts and to collect them, if and when accessible. This is the first nightmare. The second will be examining those manuscripts and deciding on their hierarchy. It is not correct just to improve upon an earlier edition, nor to select arbitrarily at face value a single manuscript which would serve as the basis for an edition. And, after we have been able, with luck, to decide about the main branches of the tradition and to select in each one the most appropriate material, the third nightmare arises from the critical apparatus, full of stray words, ramblings, abbreviations and symbols. The western tradition favours a positive apparatus, but in the case of Indian texts a negative one might lighten our task. The difficult art of giving only the strictly necessary information on the history of the tradition, while enlightening the reader on the value of the text he is to read, as well as of the unselected readings, is a painstaking discipline and cannot be mastered without tears.

(François Gros, from: "Manuscripts: material culture and method", Key-note address delivered at the National Seminar on Palm-leaf manuscripts, jointly organised by the Institute of Asian Studies and Pondicherry Central University, 11th to 13th January 1985 (cf. Kannan/Clare 1996: 483 f.).

II.1 Surviving *Caṅkam* Manuscripts: Descriptive Catalogue

The number of surviving witnesses for the *Caṅkam* corpus is up to this day unknown. On the one hand, fresh searches are still underway in private households and smaller libraries, and claims are published when new manuscript material has been discovered, as in the case of the newly founded manuscript library of the Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathy Visva Mahavidyalaya near Kāñcipuram. The new internal catalogue of that institution lists no less than three palm-leaf manuscripts of *Caṅkam* texts (*Eṭṭuttokai*, *Puṟanāṉūṟu* and *Paripāṭal*), but none of them can be located at present. On the other hand, numerous manuscripts listed in older catalogues, beginning with Chellamuthu et al. 1989–91 and Hikosaka /Samuel 1980–98, cannot be found anymore. These lists will be given in a separate chapter. The following descriptive catalogue is based on recent research work of the *Caṅkam* project conducted at the EFEO centre in Pondicherry,

where the library keeps digital and/or paper copies of most of the manuscripts.

Texts come singly in manuscripts, but there are also many forms of multiple-text manuscripts. Two serial manuscripts are available for the *Eṭṭuttokai*, but in fact we do not know how many texts were originally included. It is true that the Tiruvāvaṭuturai wooden cover reads "*Eṭṭuttokai*", which would mean that all eight anthologies belong there, but evidence is available only for the six older texts: the UVSL group of three manuscripts contains the full *Naṟṟiṇai*, *Kuṟuntokai*, one half-leaf of *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu* (*AiN*), the *Patiṟṟuppattu*, *Akanāṉūṟu* and *Puṟanāṉūṟu* (*PN*), while Tiruvāvaṭuturai includes the last hundred poems of *AN*, the *AiN* and the *Pati*, along with a catalogue entry referring to the *Kuṟuntokai*. The majority of witnesses for the *Pattuppāṭṭu* come in serial manuscripts, thus testifying to a certain amount of integrity of the collection. There are four series in the UVSL, none of them containing all ten songs, and possibly one more from Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai's collection in Kolkatta (which is not yet copied). There is another series, of a slightly different type, from the GOML. The texts included there do not all belong to the *Pattuppāṭṭu*, but also to the *Kīḻkkaṇakku*. Some of the *Pattuppāṭṭu* occur twice, albeit not in complete versions. The explanation is given by a table-of-contents page in the manuscript itself: all are paper copies of older, disintegrating palm-leaves.

A very special role is played by the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, nominally the first of the Ten Songs. It is included only in a single serial manuscript of the *Pattuppāṭṭu*. However, at the same time it is the text transmitted in the largest number of manuscripts, all palm-leaf, for any early classical Tamil text other than the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*. The obvious reason is that it did not only belong to the classical literary tradition, but was also included in the Śaiva canon, in the miscellaneous 11th *Tirumuṟai*. Moreover it must be counted among the popular devotional hymns used in daily *pūjā*. It is most frequently handed down in the latter context, and as a poem of devotion it has frequently been copied along with various types of pious material.

II.1.1 Libraries of Origin

UVSL	U. V. Swaminathaiar Library, Ceṉṉai
GOML	Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Ceṉṉai[96]
TAM	Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉam, Caracuvati Makāl Library and Research Centre
AUL	Aṇṇāmalai University Library
MSSML	Mahārājā Serfoji Sarasvatī Mahāl Library, Tañcāvūr

TU	Tamil University, Tañcāvūr
ORIML	Oriental Research Institute and Manuscript Library, Kerala University, Trivandrum
IFP	French Institute Pondicherry
NLK	National Library, Kolkatta
BL	British Library, London
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Current figures for manuscripts recently examined and mostly digitised:
183 = 81 Eṭṭuttokai + 102 Pattuppāṭṭu (132 palm-leaf/51 paper) [12 not yet copied]

manuscripts digitised:	**manuscripts located:**
Caṅkacceyyuḷ: 2 (2)	
Kuṟuntokai: 11 (2/9) + 2 folios1	GOML
Naṟṟiṇai: 5 (1/4)	
Akanāṉūṟu: 18 (7/11)	
Aiṅkuṟunūṟu: 7 (3/4) + 2 folios	
Puṟanāṉūṟu: 15 mss. (14/1) + 2 folios	
Patiṟṟupattu: 10 mss. (4/6)	1 NLK
Kalittokai: 11 mss. (5/6)	
Paripāṭal: 3 mss. + 2 folios (3/0)	
Pattuppāṭṭu: 102 mss. (92/10)	6 NLK, 3 MSSML

II.1.2 Manuscript List

Eṭṭuttokai 80 (39/41)
Caṅkacceyyuḷ: 2 [miscellaneous mss. containing stray *Caṅkam* poems]
CC1 UVSL [654/2027] *PN*, *AiN*
CC2 GOML [TD84a/D205] *Pari* Ti.

Kuṟuntokai: 11 (2/9) (except G3) [plus 2 stray folios in AUL 44572 + GOML R8842]

C1a+b palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1075/2233+1076/2234, im. 4562] complete	
C2 paper ms. UVSL [183] complete	
C3 paper ms. UVSL [184] complete	
C4 paper ms. UVSL [185] 41–99 + comm.	
C5 paper ms. UVSL [186] 101–200 + comm. up to 153	
L1 paper ms. BL London [Or. 2726] complete	sample copies only
G1 paper ms. GOML [D.224] complete	
G2 paper ms. GOML [R.5751/TR.1072] complete	
G3 paper ms. GOML [R.5752]	too damaged to copy =

Naṟṟiṇai: 5 (1/4)

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1076/2234] complete (missing: 234, 385.7dff.)

C2 paper ms. UVSL [509] incomplete: 0+2–102

G1 paper ms. GOML [D.231/PS. 67] 9–400 (missing: 59, 66, 234, 274, 385.7dff.)

G2 paper ms. GOML [R.5743/TR.1064] 9–388 (missing: 59, 66, 234, 274, 385.7dff.)

G3 paper ms. GOML [R.5745/TR.1066] complete (missing: 234, 385.7dff.)

Akanāṉūṟu: 19 (8/11)

TT* palm-leaf ms. Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai [no number] 299–400 (missing: 336–343)

NL* palm-leaf ms. NLK [3141/S. V.P. 91] complete (missing: 336–343)

C1a* palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1075/2233] 3.*kiḷavi*-400.22b (missing: 336–343)

C1b palm-leaf ms. UVSL [237] fragment: *AN* 400.22cd–26 + colophon

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [28] 1–351.7 (158.7 ff.–172 + 204)

C3 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [107] 1–351.7 (158.7ff.–172 + 204)

C4a palm-leaf ms. UVSL [292] fragment: 4–170? + old comm.

C4c palm-leaf ms. UVSL [297]: old comm. on KV–90

C5a* paper ms. UVSL [7/69] KV-120

C5b* paper ms. UVSL [8/70] 121–300

C5c* paper ms. UVSL [9/72] 301–400

C6* paper ms. UVSL [4/66] complete (missing: 336–343)

C7a paper ms. UVSL [5/67] 1–120, 301–400

C7b paper ms. UVSL [10/71] 121–125, 193–299, 126–192 (missing: 147, 149, 152, 230, 300)

C8 paper ms. UVSL [6/68] (illegible)

C9 paper ms. UVSL [11/73] KV-399 (missing: 7, 317, 322)

G1* paper ms. GOML [R.5734/TR.1050] complete (missing: 336–343)

G2* paper ms. GOML [R.5735/TR.1051] KV-325

G3 paper ms. GOML [R.5736/TR.1052] fragment: 1–36 + recent comm.

* misnumbered from 107 onwards by one downwards

Puṟanāṉūṟu: 15 mss. (14/1) [plus 2 stray folios in UVSL 654]

TT palm-leaf ms. TAM [76] KV-107 + comm.

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [237] complete

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [707] complete

C3 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [940] incomplete: scattered sequence

C4 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [440] KV-160 + 150end–197 + 9–10 + comm.

C5 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [128] KV-265 + comm.

C6 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [96] KV-262 + comm.

C7 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [576] KV-263 + comm.

C8 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [35] KV-207 + comm.

C9 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [549] KV-219 + comm.

A1 palm-leaf ms. AUL [37/44572] 1–150

T1 palm-leaf ms. ORIML Trivandrum [6417] fragment: 188, 183, 184

TU1 palm-leaf ms. Tamil University, Tañcāvūr [792] KV-96

G1 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.8842/TR.3156] 45–?140

G2 paper ms. GOML [D.284] KV.2–197 + comm.

Aiṅkuṟunūṟu: 7 (3/4) [plus 3 stray folios UVSL 654 + GOML R8842+ Or. 2726]

TT palm-leaf ms. TAM [no number] complete

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1075, im. 4652] fragment: KV-2

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [173] 29–470 + comm.

C3 paper ms. UVSL [97] complete

C4 paper ms. UVSL [98] complete

G1 paper ms. GOML [D.202] complete

G2 paper ms. GOML [D.203] KV + 1–350?

Patiṟṟupattu: 10 mss. (4/6)

TT palm-leaf ms. from Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai [no number] 11–90

NL palm-leaf ms. from NLK [3087] not yet copied

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1075/2233] 12.2–90

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [98a] 11–90 + comm.

C3 paper ms. UVSL [560] 54–90 + comm.

C4 paper ms. UVSL [559] 11–90 + comm.

C5 paper ms. UVSL [439] 11–53 + comm.

G1 paper ms. GOML [D.114/TD.44] 11–90 + comm. >

G2 paper ms. GOML [D.115] 11–51 + comm.

G3 paper ms. GOML [D.116]

Kalittokai: 11 mss. (5/6)

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [73H/226] fragment: 56, 55, 89, 92, 54, 60, 51, 103, 42, 46

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [5/225] 6–120 + comm. by Nacc.

C3 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [511/224] KV*kiḷ*.–148 + comm. by Nacc.

G1 palm-leaf ms. GOML [D.210/TD.127] 135–142 + comm. by Nacc.

G2 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.5075/TR.2229] KV-34 + comm. by Nacc.

G3 paper ms. GOML [D.212/TD.61] 6–141

G4 paper ms. GOML [R.5783/TR.1112] KV-36 + comm. by Nacc.

G5 paper ms. GOML [R.6843/] KV-36 + comm. by Nacc. (copy of G4)

G6 paper ms. GOML [R.5754/TR.1075] 10–150 + comm. by Nacc.

G7 paper ms. GOML [D.209/TD.59] 6–141 + comm. by Nacc.

G8 paper ms. GOML [D.211/TD.60] 10–37 + comm. by Nacc.

Paripāṭal: 3 mss. (3/0) [plus 2 stray folios in GOML TD84a]

TT palm-leaf ms. TAM [75] incomplete: + comm. by Pari.

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [247] incomplete: + comm. by Pari.

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1077] incomplete: + comm. by Pari.

Pattuppāṭṭu: 102 mss. (92/10) (not copied: 3 MSSML, 6 NLK)

Tirumurukāṟṟupaṭai: 57 (57) (not copied: SM 6–8, NLK 1+2)[97]

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1074/2227] comp. + comm. by Nacc.

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [589-M/190] complete

C3 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [548-A/191] incomplete: 1–90

C4 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [854/192] incomplete: 1–77

C5 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [416/193] comp. + comm. by Nacc.

C6 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [813-A/194] comp. + comm. by Nacc.

C7 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [892/195] complete + glosses

C8 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [704/196] comp. + unidentified comm.

C9 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [743/197] incomplete + glosses

C10 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1071/2229] complete

C11 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1072/2231] compl. + comm. by Pari.

C12 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1073/2230] incomplete: 1–70

C13 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1167/1467] complete: 1–294

C14 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1169/1464] complete

G1 palm-leaf ms. GOML [D.1199/TD.76] incomplete: 1–77

G2 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.1236/TR.939] comp. + comm. by Nacc.

G3 palm-leaf ms. GOML [D.1195/TD.316/] complete

G4 palm-leaf ms. GOML [D.1196/TD.583] incomplete: 1–286

G5 palm-leaf ms. GOML [D.1197/TD.584] complete

G6 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.1269/TR.964] comp. + comm. by Nacc.

G7 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.5253/TR.2355] complete

G8 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.2865/TR.1635] comp. + comm. by Nacc.

G9 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.2688/TR.1506] incomplete + unidentified comm.

G10 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.2806/TR.1588] incomp. + comm. by Nacc.

G11 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.5184/TR.2303] comp. + comm. by

Kavirācaṉ

G12 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.2929/TR.1669] incomplete: 1–280

G13 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.2970/TR.1679] complete

G14 palm-leaf ms. GOML [R.5503/TR.2435] complete

TT1 palm-leaf TAM [201] complete + comm. by Nacc.

TT2 palm-leaf TAM [201a] complete + comm. by Pari.

T1 palm-leaf ORIML Trivandrum [6272] incomplete: 1–149

T2 palm-leaf ORIML Trivandrum [4108] comp.+ comm. by Nacc.

T3 palm-leaf ORIML Trivandrum [6389] comp.+ comm. by Nacc.

T4 palm-leaf ORIML Trivandrum [8849A] complete

T5 palm-leaf ORIML Trivandrum [11500] incomplete: 1–275, 288–317

TU1 palm-leaf ms. TU Tañcāvūr [2391/3354] incomplete: 1–263

TU2 palm-leaf ms. TU Tañcāvūr [2522-1/3696] complete

TU3 palm-leaf ms. TU Tañcāvūr [2522-2/3697] compl. + unidentified comm.

SM1 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [227/254] incomplete + comm. by Nacc.

SM2 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [823b/1312] complete

SM3 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [973/1125] compl. + comm. by Nacc.

SM4 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [1587b] incomplete + comm. by Nacc.

SM5 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [1607c] complete

SM6 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [689e/545] too damaged to copy

SM7 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [803c/1252] too damaged to copy

SM8 palm-leaf ms. MSSML [1282b] too damaged to copy

A1 palm-leaf AUL [860/97] complete

I1 palm-leaf IFP Pondy [RE-04420] complete

I2 palm-leaf IFP Pondy [RE-25365] comp.+ comm. by Nacc. (after Aṟumukaṉāvalār)

I3 palm-leaf IFP Pondy [RE-45898e] complete

I4 palm-leaf IFP Pondy [RE-47681a] complete + comm. by Nacc.

I5 palm-leaf IFP Pondy [RE-47752] complete + comm. by Nacc.

NL1 Kolkatta palm-leaf ms. [3092/110] not yet copied

NL2 Kolkatta palm-leaf ms. [3152/111] not yet copied

P1 palm-leaf BN Paris [Indien 66] complete + comm. by Parimēlaḻakar

P2 palm-leaf BN Paris [Indien 67] complete + comm. by Nacc.

P3 palm-leaf mss. BN Paris [Indien 28] complete

Porunarāṟṟupaṭai 5 (4/1)

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1074] complete + comm. by Nacc.

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [579-B(=A)] complete + comm. by Nacc.

C3 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [231a] complete

NL palm-leaf ms. NLK [3112] not yet copied

G1 paper ms. GOML [D.268] complete + comm. by Nacc.

Ciṟupāṇāṟṟupaṭai 10 (8/2)

C1 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1074] complete + comm. by Nacc.

C2 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [184-A] complete

C3 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [579-A(=B)] complete + comm. by Nacc.

C4 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [1070] 11–269

C5 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [41-C] complete

C6 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [285] 1–163

C7 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [166] fragment: Veṇpā + e.c.













































According to front page with notes from Cāminātaiyar's hand (*aiyar avarkaḷ kuṟippukaḷuṭaṉ*); according to the cover page gift from Ka. Cuppiramaṇiya Aiyar, B. A.. Complete with KV and traditional colophon (im. 118); followed by stray poems and word concordance of the *AiN* plus one of the *Puṟattiraṭṭu* (70 sheets). Transitional script without *puḷḷi*-s (except in the traditional colophon) or distinction of *e/ē, o/ō, ā/ra*, but modern characters for the *ṟ* series. *Scriptio continua*, *cīr* marked by pencil strokes, with new line and indentation for each poem, Tamil poem number, *kiḷavi*, number within the decade; decade titles preceding and following the decade.

C4 paper manuscript from the UVSL [97] 159 pages, 33 × 21 cm, poems on both pages, separated by blank line, good condition though slightly translucent, easy reading (on brownish lined paper in black ink), according to the cover page gift from Ka. Cuppiramaṇiya Aiyar, B. A.. Complete: 1–500, no traditional colophon. Modern script and completely marked, full split of line and *cīr*. European numbers in decades, decade title, poem, *kiḷavi*, Tamil numbers in decades, decade end mentioned.

G1 paper manuscript from the GOML [D.202] 150 pages, 22 × 33 cm, 25 lines per page, poems on both pages, separated by blank lines (on brownish lined paper with black ink, rare corrections, hand changes with 350, for that part corrections and variants in thick black), bad condition, translucent, partly torn (odd pages on older and browner paper pasted into current ms.), but legible. Complete with KV, no traditional colophon. Modern script with full marking, line and *cīr* split. European page numbers, *tiṇai* (per hundred), number and title of decade, European poem number, poem, *kiḷavi*, Tamil number for poem within the decade.

G2 paper manuscript from the GOML [D.203] 101 pages, 23 × 30 cm, 26–31 lines per page, poems on both pages, pages of different size and quality pasted together into one ms. (on rather brownish lined paper with black ink, corrections and additions in black, pencil and red), according to front page purchased in 1893/94, damaged but quite legible. Incomplete: KV + 1–350. Modern script with full marking and line split, but no *cīr* split, decade title and number, European number for poem within the

decade (partly in the margin further numbers in brackets and in another hand), poem, *kiḷavi*.

\+ stray poems in *Puṟanāṉūṟu* mss. G1 GOML [R8842] and in *Caṅkacceyyuḷ* CC1 UVSL [654]: *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu Tiraṭṭu*, as well as one additional page with 4 poems in the London manuscript of the *Kuṟuntokai* Or. 2726.

Patiṟṟupattu: 10 (4/6) (not copied: NLK)

TT palm-leaf manuscript from Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai [77; cover says "*Eṭṭuttokai*", following *AN* and *AiN*] 28 folios, 30 × 5 cm, 14 or 15 lines per page, old and worm-eaten, very few crumbling margins, still very legible apart from single *akṣara*-s. European page numbers in blue (123–177). Incomplete: 11.1c–90 (marginal title reads *iraṇṭām pattu;* end on p. 177 reads *oṉpatām pattu muṟṟum*); *pada* index in the margin. Traditional script: old characters for the *ṟ* series, no *puḷḷi-s*, no differentiation between long and short *e/ē* and *o/ō*, nor between *ā* and *ra*, traditional *sandhi*, *scriptio continua*.; poems are followed by *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar* and number in decade plus *patikam* at the end of the decade; poem ends partly marked with tiny bright blue vertical stroke. NL palm-leaf ms. from NLK [3087] not yet copied

C1 palm-leaf manuscript from the UVSL [1075 = part of the serial *Eṭṭuttokai* ms.; preceded by *KT* + *AiN* and followed by *AN*] 25 folios, 36 × 4 cm, 10 lines per page, worm-eaten and partly crumbling margins, occasional blank spaces, but very legible. European page numbers in black (93–141). Incomplete: 12.2b–90 (end on p. 141 reads *oṉpatām pattu muṟṟum)*. Traditional script without *puḷḷi*-s or distinction between *e/ē, o/ō, ā/ra*, old characters for the *ṟ* series, *scriptio continua*, traditional order giving poem, *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar* and number in decade plus *patikam* at the end of the decade.

C2 palm-leaf manuscript from the UVSL [98a] 68 folios, 41 × 4.5 cm, 11 lines per page, partly well preserved with a few crumbling margins, towards the end (f. 285–298) partly very crumbling and broken; regular and legible (slightly curling leaves with hardly decipherable first/last

lines). *Pada* index in the margin; Tamil numbers (1–65; later broken), double European page numbers in black and very thick black (162–298). Complete: 11–90 with *urai* (end on p. 141 reads *oṉpatām pattu muṟṟum)*. Traditional script without *puḷḷi*-s or distinction between *e/ē, o/ō, ā/ra*, old characters for the *ṟ* series, *scriptio continua*, slightly elongated *ṭa*; traditional order giving poem, *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar, urai* and number in decade plus *patikam* at the end of the decade.

C3 paper manuscript from the UVSL [560] 101 pages, 21 × 17 cm, 16 lines on odd pages (bound on top); badly worm-eaten, but legible (on brownish lined paper with black ink; variants and corrections between the lines mostly in blue, sometimes in pencil or bright blue; some pages completely in blue); no page numbers. Incomplete: 54–90 with *urai* (end on p. 101 reads *oṉpatām pattu muṭintatu)*. Transitional script with modern character for the *ṟ* series, basically no vowel marks or *kāl* distinction, no *puḷḷi*-s, *scriptio continua*; traditional order giving absolute number (in blue), poem, *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar, urai* and number in decade plus *patikam* at the end of the decade.

C4 paper manuscript from the UVSL [559] 326 pages, 28 × 23 cm, 22 lines on odd pages; very brittle and broken margins, but legible (on brownish lined paper with black ink; variants and corrections between the lines in bright blue and pencil); European page numbers (1–183), according to title page *taṉikkākitaṅkaḷ*. Complete: 11–90 with *urai* (beginning reads *patiṟṟuppattu iraṇṭām pattu*; end reads *oṉpatām pattu muṟṟum. iraṇṭām pattu mutal oṉpatām pattu varaikkum*.). Transitional script with modern character for the *ṟ* series, basically no vowel marks or *kāl* distinction, no *puḷḷi*-s, *scriptio continua*; traditional order naming the poet, followed by European number, poem, *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar, urai* and number in decade plus *patikam* at the end of the decade.

C5 paper manuscript from the UVSL [439] 186 pages, 21.5 × 17 cm, 12 lines on odd pages (from p. 41 on top-bound); slightly worm-eaten, legible (on brownish and stained lined paper with black ink; variants and corrections between the lines in pencil or bright blue); page numbers (1–114) according to the cover page gift from Ka. Cuppiramaṇiya Aiyar, B. A.. Incomplete: 11–53 with *urai* (preceded by 75 pages with *Tillaiyantāti*,

Tirumayilaiyantāti, *Aruṇaiyantāti*). Transitional script with modern character for the *ṟ* series, occasional vowel marks, no *kāl* distinction, occasional *puḷḷi*-s, *scriptio continua*; traditional order giving absolute number (in blue), poem, *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar, urai* and number in decade plus *patikam* at the end of the decade.

G1 paper ms. GOML [D.114/TD.44] 213 pages, 27.5 × 23 cm, 20 lines per page, European page numbers, laminated with a sort of textile due to its brittle condition (inner margins partly crumbled away), laminated paper turning brownish, ruled lines, black ink, beautiful hand. Complete: 11–90 with comm.; inner title page reads (pencil): 2-6-27, *Patiṟṟuppattu (mūlamum uraiyum) (2 mutal 9m. pattu muṭivu)* 9-6-27; end on p. 213 reads: *oṉpatām pattu muṟṟum. iraṇṭām pattu mutal oṉpatām pattu varaikkum eḻuti muṭintatu*. Modern script with *puḷḷi*, vowel distinction and line breaks, but no *cīr* split. Partly European punctuation, "…" presumably for blanks. European poem numbers in the left margin, poem followed by *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar* and commentary in paragraphs, Tamil number. Last sentence notes the loss of the 10th decade.

G2 paper ms. GOML [D.115/TD.45] 80 pages, 33 × 21 cm, 25 lines per page, European page numbers, composite manuscript (followed by Aṟaneṟiccāram an Kuṟuntiraṭṭu); ruled darkening paper with black ink, clean hand. Incomplete: 11–35 with comm. up to 34; inner title page reads: (9-6-28; 1) *Patiṟṟuppattu mūlamum uraiyum (2 mutal 5 laṉ?)… 9.6.28*. Traditional script without *puḷḷi,* double *kompu* for *ē/ō* used occasionally, no distinction between *ā* and *ra*, modern characters for the *ṟ* series, line break, but no *cīr* split. Poem followed by *tuṟai, vaṇṇam, tūkku, peyar* and commentary in *scriptio continua*, Tamil number, gaps marked in similar places as G1 (= aborted copy of the same source?); ends abruptly.

G3 paper ms. GOML [D.116/TD.46] 69 pages, 34 × 21 cm, 25 lines per page, European page numbers, ruled darkening paper with black ink, inner margins beginning to crumble (modern binding crumbled away with one to two *akṣaras*), black ink and neat hand. No title page but title above reads: 9.6.22 (pencil), śrīḥ, *Patiṟṟuppattu*.Complete: 11-90. European poem numbers































naṉṟāka.)

C2 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [579-B(=A)] see above. Complete with traditional colophon (p. 29, l. 2f. *eṉpataṉāṟ piṉṉar avaṉāci ākavum vaṟateṉa veṉṟuṇāka porunarāṟṟuppaṭaikk' āciriyaṉ pārattuvāci nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceyta v-urai muṭintatu itu karikāṟ peruvaḷattāṉai muṭattāmak kaṇṇiyār pāṭiya atu muṟṟum. śrīc ceyam/śrī rā[ma]ceyam* ‡‡.)

C3 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [231a; part of a serial ms. with *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ*, *Ilakkaṇakkottu*, *Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaṭai*] 13 folios, 43 × 3 cm, 9 lines per page, very well preserved, but reflecting, densely written and hard to read. European page numbers 1–26. According to marginal title, text with Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar's commentary; complete with traditional colophon (p. 26, l. 3 f.: *porunarāṟṟuppaṭaikk' ācariyar pārattuvāci nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceyta v-urai muṭintatu – itu karikāṟperuvaḷattāṉē muṭattāmakkaṇṇiyār pāṭiyatu muṟṟum – iḵtu mayilai aṇṇācāmi y-upāttiyā[l e]ḻutiyatu – civamayam*). Traditional script without *puḷḷi*-s or distinction between *e/ē, o/ō, ā/ra*, but modern characters for the *ṟ* series, *scriptio continua.*

NL palm-leaf ms. NLK [3112] not yet copied

G1 paper ms. from the GOML [D.268 = D.120/TP.47] see above. Complete with traditional colophon (p. 43: *porunarāṟṟuppaṭaikk' āciriyaṉ pārattuvāci. nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceyta v-urai muṭintatu. itu karikāṟperuvaḷattāṉai muṭittāmak kaṇṇiyār pāṭiyatu muṟṟiṟṟu*.)

***Ciṟupāṇāṟṟupaṭai*: 10 (8/2) (not copied: NL)**

C1 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [1074] see above. Complete with traditional colophon and two Veṇpās (p. 158, 1. 9ff.: *iṭaikkaḻināṭṭu nallūr naṟṟattaṉār pāṭiya ciṟupāṇāṟṟuppaṭaikku āciriyaṉ pārattuvāci nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceyta v-urai muṭintatu*).

C2 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [184-A] see above. Complete with traditional colophon and two Veṇpās (p. 20, l. 3 f.: *eṟumā nalliyak koṭaṉai yiṭaikkaḻināṭṭu nallūr naṟṟattaṉār pāṭiya ciṟupāṇāṟṟupaṭai muṟṟum. kuruvē tuṇai vēlē tuṇai.*)

C3 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [579-A(=B)] see above. Complete with traditional colophon (p. 58, l. 4 f.: *ciṟupāṇāṟṟuk' āciriyaṉ pārattuvāci nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceyta v-urai muṭintatu muṟṟum. cokkar tuṇai aṅkayaṟkaṇṇammai tuṇai*)

C4 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [1070; according to UVSL catalogue second copy of 579-A] with Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar's commentary, 17 folios, 38 × 3.5 cm, 9–10 lines per page, well preserved and legible. European page numbers 1–33 (im. with pages 30, 32 and 34missing). Incomplete: beginning with line 11 up to the end, but cut off in the comm. on the last line. Traditional script without *puḷḷi*-s or distinction between *e/ē, o/ō, ā/ra*, but modern characters for the *ṟ* series, *scriptio continua.*

C5 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [41-C = No 4 in a composite ms. after *Cit-amparac Ceyyuṭkōvai*, *Tolkāppiyam Iḷampūraṇam* and *Pirayōka Vivēkam*] text with Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar's commentary, 20 folios, 46 × 3.25 cm, 9 lines per page, very well preserved and legible. European page numbers from 1–38 plus 1 blank folio. Complete with traditional colophon (p. 37, l. 8 f.: *ciṟupāṇāṟṟuppaṭaikk' āciriyaṉ pārattuvāci nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceyta v-urai muṭintatu muṟṟum. itai mayilai aṇṇācuvāmi y-upāttiyāl eḻutiyatē y-ām.*). Traditional script without *puḷḷi*-s or distinction between *e/ē, o/ō, ā/ra*, but modern characters for the *ṟ* series, *scriptio continua.*

C6 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [285] 4 folios, 44 × 3 cm, 4 columns of 8–9 lines, glossy and very well preserved, legible. European page numbers 1–6. Incomplete: 1–163 (marginal title: *cirupāṇāṟṟuppaṭai mūlam*; unidentified non-*Caṅkam* continuation from p. 5, c. 4, l. 6 onwards; break marked in blue). Traditional script without *puḷḷi*-s or distinction between *ā/ra*, but modern characters for the *ṟ* series and distinction for *e/ē, o/ō*, *scriptio continua*, but arranged line-wise.

C7 palm-leaf ms. UVSL [166; followed by *Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaṭai*] 1 folio, 45 × 3 cm, 9 lines per page, slightly blurred, very well preserved and but legible. Fragment: two Veṇpās + traditional colophon (p. 1, ll. 1–3: *ōymānāṭṭu nalliyakkōṭaṉai y-iṭaikkaḻināṭṭu nallūr naṟṟattaṉār pāṭiyatu.*). Traditional script without *puḷḷi*-s or distinction between *e/ē, o/ō, ā/ra*, but modern characters for the *ṟ* series, *scriptio continua.*

NL palm-leaf ms. NLK [3112] not yet copied

G1 paper ms. from the GOML [D.266 = D.120/TP.47] see above. Complete with traditional colophon (p. 71: *ciṟupāṇārukk' āciriyaṉ pārattuvāci nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceyta v-urai muṟṟiṟṟu*.)

G2 paper ms. from the GOML [D.74? = D.120/TP.47] see above. Fragment: 235a–269 without traditional colophon, but with the first of two Veṇpās.

***Perumpāṇāṟṟupaṭai*: 9 (6/3) (not copied: NL)**

C1 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [1074] see above. Complete with traditional colophon and Veṇpā (p. 280, l. 8: *perumpāṇāṟṟukkup pārattuvāci nacciṉākkiṉiyāṉceytav-urai muṭintatu – toṇṭaimāṉiḷantiraiyaṉaikkaṭiyalūr uruttiraṅ kaṇṇār pāṭiya perumpāṇāṟṟuppaṭai – aḻakiya tirucciṟṟampalam eḻuttu.*)

C2 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [184-B] see above. Complete with traditional colophon and Veṇpā (p. 41, l. 7 f.: *toṇṭaimāṉ iḷantiraiyaṉaik kaṭiyalūr uruttiraṅ kaṇṇaṉār pāṭiya perumpāṇāṟṟuppaṭai muṟṟum. cuppira[ma] ṇi‡‡‡‡‡‡‡‡[ku]ruvē tuṇai*)

C3 palm-leaf ms. from the UVSL [579-B] see above. Complete with traditional colophon (p. 114, l. 4 f.: *perumpāṇāṟṟukk' āciriyaṉ pārattuvāci nacciṉārkkiṉiyāṉ ceytu v-urai muṟṟum.* [grantha:]





















before the *Puṟanāṉūṟu*. The numerous paper manuscripts of the UVSL are included in vol. 5 of the catalogue.

II.2.1.3 GOML Catalogue (30 Vols)

One of the major problems when dealing with manuscripts from the GOML is the bewildering variety of initial shelf marks, no doubt explained by the fact that today's collection is made up of many earlier smaller collections. The most common ones are D, R, TR, TD and TP, but there are also simple numbers. Often a manuscript carries several of these. In many cases the printed catalogues (beginning with Raṅgācāryā/Kuppuswami Sastri/Subramanya Sastri 1912–39: *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Tamil Manuscripts in the Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras* for the D shelf markss, and Raṅgācāryā/Kuppuswami Sastri/ Subramanya Sastri 1913–49: *A Triennial Catalogue of Manuscripts for the Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras* for the R shelf marks; continued under various titles and editors up to today) do not agree with the card index. In any case the catalogue usually gives only one number, with an occasional reference to an earlier D shelf mark (apparently the oldest part of the collection, mostly palmleaf manuscripts, many of them extant today only in the form of paper copies made at the GOML). The descriptive catalogue in chapter II.1 simply lists all the numbers noted on the manuscripts and/or their covers. These are not always in concordance with the simple catalogue shelf marks, so that in some cases it is necessary to compare the properties listed in the older description.



	[R.5075] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XII not available
	[R.5754] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XII, p. 4738
	[R.5783] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XII not available
	[R.6843] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XIII, p. 436
Pati	[D.114] √	GOML D. cat., vol. I, p. 92 f.
	[D.115] √	GOML D. cat., vol. I, p. 93
	[D.116] √	GOML D. cat., vol. I, p. 93

Pattup. [D.120] √ GOML D. cat., vol. I., p. 98 as palm-leaf (title: *Maturaik.*)

{today paper copy containing also [D.232] GOML D. cat., vol. I., p. 189 f., [D.234] GOML cat., vol. I., p. 191 f., [D.266] GOML cat., vol. I., p. 222 f., *Perump.* u. [D.267] GOML cat., vol. I., p. 223 f., [D.268] GOML cat., vol. I., p. 224 f., [D.269] GOML cat., vol. I., p. 225 f.}

Tirumuru.	[D.1195] √	GOML D. cat., vol. III, p. 1047 f. {contained in [D.525]; D. cat. vol. I, p. 500}
	[D.1196] √	GOML D. cat., vol. III, p. 1048
	[D.1197] √	GOML D. cat., vol. III, p. 1049
	[D.1198]	GOML D. cat., vol. III, p. 1049 {not found}
	[D.1199] √	GOML D. cat., vol. III, p. 1049 f. {contained in [D.127]; D. cat. vol. I, p. 105}
	[D.1200]	GOML D. cat., vol. III, p. 1050 {not found}
	[R.1236] √	GOML R. cat., vol. VIII, p. 2180
	[R.1269] √	GOML R. cat., vol. VIII, p. 2191
	[R.2688] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XI, p. 3113 {contained in [R.2686]; R. cat. vol. XI, p. 3112}
	[R.2806] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XI, p. 3180
	[R.2865] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XI, p. 3216
	[R.2929] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XI, p. 3257 {contained in [R.2926]; R. cat. vol. XI, p. 3255}
	[R.2970] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XI, p. 3292 {contained in [R.2966]; R. cat. vol. XI, p. 3289}
	[R.5184] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XII, not available
	[R.5253] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XII, not available
	[R.5503] √	GOML R. cat., vol. XII, not available
	[R.5585]	GOML R. cat., vol. XII, not available {not found}

II.2.1.4 Tiruvāvaṭuturai Atīṉam, Caracuvati Makāl Library and Research Centre According to Ias

The Tiruvāvaṭuturai manuscripts are described in the *Descriptive Catalogue of Palm-Leaf Manuscripts in Tamil,* although not very accurately. The serial *Eṭṭuttokai* ms. containing *AiN*, *Pati* and part of the *AN* is entered as No. 77, whereas in the library that number is given to the *Tiruppātirip Puliyūr Purāṇam*. Of the missing manuscripts, the *Kuṟuntokai* is no longer described, but there are still entries for five manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*. Of these, only two (201 and 201a) can be located at present.

Tirumuru.	[210]	cat. vol. III.2, p. 728f. {not found}
	[236zz]	cat. vol. III.2, p. 730 {not found}
	[201] √	cat. vol. III.2, p. 730f.
	[201a] √	cat. vol. III.2, p. 731
	[210a]	cat. vol. III.2, p. 732 {not found}

II.2.1.5 Tamil University Library Catalogue

The older Tañcāvūr University catalogue (Chellamuthu et al. 1985) is not much more than a hand list and has the drawback that it includes little more than a thousand manuscripts, whereas by now the collection is said to comprise more than ten thousand. The new descriptive catalogue (Kōvaimaṇi 2000–2010: *Tamiḻccuvaṭikaḷ viḷakka aṭṭavaṇai*, so far 8 vols) contains three more palm-leaf mss. of the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, while the one entered in the old hand list as [128] can no longer be located.

Puṟanāṉūṟu	[606] √	Chellamuthu et al. 1985: 56
Tirumuru.	[128]	Chellamuthu et al. 1985: 56 {not found}
Tirumuru.	[2391] √	TU cat., vol. not available
Tirumuru.	[2522-1] √	TU cat., vol. not available
Tirumuru.	[2522-2] √	TU cat., vol. not available

II.2.1.6 Caracuvati Makāl Library Thanjavur Catalogue

The Caracuvati Makāl catalogue (Olaganatha Pillay et al. 1960–81: *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Tamil Manuscripts in the Tanjore*



II.2.1.8 ORIML Trivandrum Catalogue

Kerala University has printed a hand list (Padmakumari 2009: *Index of Tamil Manuscripts*) from which several *Pattupāṭṭu* manuscripts cannot be located.

Puṟanāṉūṟu	[6417] √	
Pattuppāṭṭu	[2315]	{not found}
	[2315B]	{not found}
Tirumuru.	[11500] √	
	[8849A] √	
	[6272] √	
	[6389] √	
	[4108] √	
Mullaip.	[11312]	{not found}
	[2315c]	{not found}

II.2.1.9 National Library Kolkatta Catalogue

For the National library there is a printed hand list of the Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai collection (Caṇmukam Piḷḷai/Cuntaramūrtti 1979: *Kalkattā tēciya nūlakat tamiḻc ōlaiccuvaṭikaḷ*). In November 2005 I was allowed to see those manuscripts that are in good condition, but permission to photograph has so far been given only for the one *Akanāṉūṟu*.

Akanāṉūṟu	[3141] √	
Patiṟṟuppattu	[3087]	{not yet copied}
Pattuppāṭṭu	[3112]	{not yet copied}
Porun.	~	
Ciṟup.	~	
Perump.	~	
Mullaip.	~	
Tirumuru.	[3092]	{not yet copied}
	[3152]	{not yet copied}

II.2.1.10 Manuscripts That Currently Cannot Be Located = 20

GOML Ceṉṉai:	*Tirumuru.* GOML [R.1198]	
	Tirumuru. GOML [R.1200]	
	Tirumuru. GOML [R.5585]	
TVM Tiruvāvaṭutuṟai:	*KT* [77a]	
	Tirumuru. [210]	
	Tirumuru. [236-zz]	
	Tirumuru. [210-a]	
Tamil University Tañcāvūr:	*Tirumuru.* [128]	
MSSML Tañcāvūr:	*Tirumuru.* [2081i]	{cat., vol. XXVI, p. 237}
AUL Aṇṇāmalai:	*KT* [44600]	{not in the Aṇṇāmalai list}
	NA [44601]	{not in the Aṇṇāmalai list}
	PN [44552]	{= [44572] *Caṅkacceyyuḷ*?}
ORIML Trivandrum:	*Pattup.* [2315]	
	Pattup. [2315b]	
	Mullaip. [11312]	
	Mullaip. [2315C]	
TSA Tamil College Coimbatore:	*PN* [148]	
	Neṭunal. [148c]	
	Kuṟiñcip. [148b]	











Table 3: Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940, *Naṟṟiṇai*

nūl amount of text	*ēṭu allatu kaṭitam* material	*uriyavar* proprietor	*kuṟippu* significance
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*ēṭu* palm-leaf	*Maturait Tamiḻ Caṅkam*	*pala piratikaḷai oppu nōkkip pāṭapētaṅ kuṟikkap peṟṟullatu* noting down variants from comparison with many mss.
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Rā. Rākavaiyaṅkār*	*pala piratikaḷai oppu nōkkip pāṭapētaṅ kuṟikkap peṟṟullatu* noting down variants from comparison with many mss.
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam* GOML	
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Pavāṉantar Kaḻakam, Ceṉṉai*	
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Pavāṉantar Kaḻakam, Ceṉṉai*	

Au.Cu. Turaicāmip Piḷḷai 1966

ēṭukaḷ palm-leaf manuscripts:

1. Araciṉar kaiyeḻuttu Nūl Nilaiyam = GOML?
2. Maturait Tamiḻc Cāṅkam (institution)
3. Ṭommiccēri [sic] Karuppaiyāt Tēvar (individual)
4. Putuppaṭṭi Civa Mu. Muttaiyā Ceṭṭiyār (individual)

Akanāṉūṟu: 7+4

Irākavaiyaṅkār 1923/24

1. *Ceṉṉai Oriental Manuscript Library piratiyaip pārttu eḻutikoṇṭa kaiyeḻuttu pirati – 1*
   one handwritten copy made after seeing a ms. in the GOML in Ceṉṉai
   (itu centamiḻp pattirāciriyar Tiru. Nārāyaṇa Aiyaṅkār svāmikaḷ tamiḻc caṅkattiṟkut tantutaviya Tēvarpirāṉ Kavirāyaravarkaḷ vīṭṭup piratiyuṭaṉ oppunōkki tiruttam ceyyappaṭṭatu.)
   (This was corrected after comparison with a ms. from the house of Tēvarpirāṉ Kavirāyar, who had provided it to the Svāmikaḷ Tamil *Caṅkam* of Tiru. Nārāyaṇa Aiyaṅkār, teacher of high Tamil.)

2. *perumpalaṉai ēṭṭaip pārttu eḻutik koṇṭa kaiyeḻuttup pirati – 1*
   one handwritten copy made after seeing a palm-leaf at Perumpalaṉai
3. *tirunelvēli Śrimāṉ nellaiyappak kavirāyaravarkaḷ ēṭu – 1*
   one palm-leaf ms. by Śrimāṉ nellaiyappak kavirāyar from Tirunelvēli
4. *kālañ ceṉṟa ceṉṉai Śrīmāṉ Ti.Ta. Kaṉakacuntirampiḷḷaiyavarkaḷ ēṭu – 1*
   one palm-leaf ms. by the late Śrīmāṉ Ti.Ta. Kaṉakacuntiram Piḷḷai from Ceṉṉai
5. *Śrī U. Vē. Aiyār kāyiṭap pirati – 1*
   one paper ms. by Śrī U. Vē. Aiyar
6. *ceṉṉai mērirāṇiyār kallūrit tamiḻ paṇṭitar Śrīmāṉ Kā. Rā. Namaccivāya mutaliyāravarkaḷ pirati – 1*
   one ms. by Śrīmāṉ Kā. Rā. Namaccivāyamutaliyar, Tamil pandit at the Queen Mary High School in Ceṉṉai
7. *Tirumayilai vitvāṉ Śrīmāṉ Caṇmukam Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ ēṭu (itu kuṟai) – 1*
   one damaged palm-leaf ms. by the Vidvan Śrīmāṉ Caṇmukam Piḷḷai from Tirumayilai



uraippiratikaḷ mss. with commentary

1. Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉattu Śrī Cuppiramaṇiya Tēcikaravarkaḷ: 1–260
2. Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉattu Śrī Ampalavāṇatēcikaravarkaḷ: 1–170
3. Āḻvārtirunakari, Tāyavalantīrtta Kavirāyaravarkaḷ (*utavi*: Śrīvaikuṇṭam, Ī. Cupparāya Mutaliyaravarkaḷ): 1–261
4. Mitilaippaṭṭi, Aḻakiya Ciṟṟampalak Kavirāyaravarkaḷ (*utavi*: piratik kuriyavarkaḷatu paramparaiyōrākiya Aḻakiya Ciṟṟampalak Kavirāyara-varkaḷ): 1–266
5. Ibid.: 1–177
6. Tirunelvēliyaic cārnta Vaṇṇārpēṭṭai, Tiruppāṟkaṭaṉāta Kavirāyaravarkaḷ (utavi: Yāḻppāṇam, Rāvpakatūr, Ci. Vai. Tāmōtaram Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ): 1–260
7. Teṉkāci Cuppaiyāp Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ (*utavi*: Mēlakaram Tirikūṭarācappak Kavirāyaravarkaḷ): 1–48
8. Ibid. (patavuraicitilam): 1–57
9. Ibid. (patavuraicitilam): 7–48
10. Tūttukkuṭi, Kumāracāmip Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ (*utavi*: Āṟumukamaṅkalam, Ē. Cuntaramūrttiyā Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ): 1–216
11. Ibid.: 1–196

+12. Maturait Tamiḻc*Caṅkam*: pirati

+13. Yāḻppāṇattu Vaṇṇainakar Śrī Cuvāmināta Paṇṭitar: pirati

Table 5: Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940, *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*

nūl amount of text	*ēṭu allatu kaṭitam* material	*uriyavar* proprietor	*kuṟippu* significance
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam* GOML	*uraiyuṭaṉ kūṭiyatu* joined with commentary
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam* GOML	*uraiyuṭaṉ kūṭiyatu* endowed with commentary

***Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*: 4+2+1+1**

Cāminātaiyar 1903

mūlamum karutturaiyum uḷḷa piratikaḷ

1. *Tiruvāvaṭuturai yātīṉattup pirati – 1*
   one ms. from Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉam
2. *māṭcimaip poruntiya Śrī Jē. Em. Vēluppiḷḷaiyavarkaḷ. F. M. U. pirati – 1* one ms. by the honourable Śrī Jē. Em. Vēluppiḷḷai, F. M.U.

3. *Tirumayilai Vitvāṉ māṭcimaip poruntiya Caṇmukam Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ pirati – 1* one ms. by the honourable Caṇmukam Piḷḷai, Vidvan of Tirumayilai *mūlamum karutturaiyum, paḻaiyavuraiyum uḷḷa pirati*
4. *Āḻvārtirunakari māṭcimaip poruntiya Śrī Tē. Lakṣmaṇa Kavirāyaravarkaḷ pirati – 1*
   one ms. by the honourable Śrī Tē. Lakṣmaṇa Kavirāyar from Āḻvārtirunakari

Ti. Catacivaiyar 1943:

> *... karaveṭṭimēṟku metaṭist tamiḻp pāṭacālait talaimai āciriyarā yiruppavarum ākiya Tiruvāḷar A. Tā. Cuppiramaṇiyam avarkaḷ aiṅkuṟunūṟu muḻuvataṟkum uraiyeḻutiya kākitam kaiyeḻuttip pirati oṉṟu ...*
> "one paper manuscript written with commentary for the whole Aiṅkuṟunūṟu by A. Tā. Cuppiramaṇiyam, who was principal of the Methodist Tamil High School of East Karaveṭṭi"

Au.Cu. Turaicāmip Piḷḷai 1957:

1. one additional ms. from Cīrkaḻi Kōvintacāmi Reṭṭiyar (containing a number of additional lines). [information provided by Thomas Lehmann]

Table 6: Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940, *Puṟanāṉūṟu*

nūl amount of text	*ēṭu allatu kaṭitam* material	*uriyavar* proprietor	*kuṟippu* significance
kuṟaippirati incomplete ms.	*ēṭu* palm-leaf	*Maturait Tamiḻ Caṅkam*	*uraiyōṭu kūṭiyatu* endowed with commentary
kuṟaippirati incomplete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam* GOML	*uraiyōṭu kūṭiyatu* endowed with commentary
kuṟaippirati incomplete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Ti.Ta. Kaṉaka-cuntaram Piḷḷai* (individual)	mūlapāṭam text only
kuṟaippirati incomplete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Maṉṉārkuṭi Cōmacuntaram Piḷḷai* (individual)	mūlapāṭam text only

***Patiṟṟuppattu*: 6+2**
Cāminātaiyar 1904:
kiṭaitta kaiyeḻuttup piratikaḷ: handwritten copies that were acquired

1. *Tiruvāvaṭuturai ātīṉaṉattup pirati*
   ms. from Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉam
2. *Ceṉṉaiyiluḷḷa iracāṅkattu kaiyeḻuttu pustaka cālai pirati*
   ms. from the GOML in Ceṉṉai
3. *Āḻvārtirunakari Śrī Tē. Ilaṭcmaṇa Kavirāyaravarkaḷ vīṭṭu pirati*
   ms. from the house of Śrī Tē. Ilaṭcmaṇa Kavirāyar from Āḻvārtirunakari
4. *Āḻvārtirunakari māṭcimai poruntiya Śrī Jē.Em. Vēluppiḷḷaiyavarkaḷ pirati*
   ms. by the honourable Śrī Jē.Em. Vēluppiḷḷai from Āḻvārtirunakari
5. *Tirumayilai vittuvāṉ Śrī Caṇmukam Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ pirati*
   ms. by Śrī Caṇmukam Piḷḷai, Vidvan[110] from Tirumayilai
6. *Ti. Ta. Kaṉakacuntaram Piḷḷaiyavarkaḷ B. A. pirati*
   ms. by Ti. Ta. Kaṉakacuntaram Piḷḷai, B. A.

Turaicāmip Piḷḷai 1950 mentions in his preface two further manuscripts without giving specifications.

Table 7: Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940, *Patiṟṟuppattu*

nūl amount of text	*ēṭu allatu kaṭitam* material	*uriyavar* proprietor	*kuṟippu* significance
2-mpattu mutal, 9-mpattu mutiya 2nd to 9th decade	*kaṭitam* paper	Rā. Rākavaiyaṅkār	*ciṟanta pirati* excellent ms.
2-mpattu mutal, 9-mpattu mutiya 2nd to 9th decade	*kaṭitam* paper	*Ti.Ta. Kaṉaka-cuntaram Piḷḷai* (individual)	*ciṟanta pirati* excellent ms.

***Kalittokai*: 10+2**

Tāmōtaram Piḷḷai 1887:

1. one palm-leaf ms. from Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉam given by Carkurunāta Cuvāmikaḷ of that Maṭam

2.+3. two palm-leaf mss. given by the Maṭam (they got these two mss. from the Southern part of Tamilnadu)

4. one palm-leaf ms. from Śrī Ri. Kaṉakacapai Piḷḷai, son of Mallākam Vicuvanātapiḷḷai in Yāḻppāṇam (Jaffna), Sri Lanka

5. one palm-leaf ms., incomplete and damaged, of Neytalkali from Cokka-linkam Piḷḷai Nellittoppu in Putuccēri

6. one palm-leaf ms. of Neytalkali from Tintivaṇam (name of the owner is not mentioned)

7.+8. two palm-leaf mss. of Neytalkali from Ceṉṉai Pirāciya Kirantamantapam (which may be the GOML)

9. one palm-leaf ms. from Tirumaṇam Kecava Cupparāya Mutaliyar
10. one palm-leaf ms. from Mayilai Rāmaliṅkampiḷḷai

(T. received some palm-leaves from Tañcāvūr Caracuvatimakal Library in bad condition, hence he did not use them for his edition. He heard that there is one teacher at Mañcakuppam in Kaṭalūr who had a *Kalittokai* ms., but it was not to be located.)

Aṉantarāmaiyar 19925+1931 mentions two further palm-leaf manuscripts he had received from Cāminātaiyar and which T. Rajeswari identifies as UVSL 551/224 and 15/225.[111]

Table 8: Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940, *Kalittokai*

nūl amount of text	*ēṭu allatu kaṭitam* material	*uriyavar* proprietor	*kuṟippu* significance
muḻuppirati complete ms.	*ēṭu* palm-leaf	*Nellai, Ampalavāṇak Kavirāyar* (individual)	*ciṟanta pirati; uraiyuṭaṉ kūṭiyatu* excellent manuscript; endowed with commentary
kuṟaippirati incomplete ms.	*kaṭitam* paper	*Pavāṉantar Kaḻakam, Ceṉṉai*	*ciṟanta pirati; uraiyuṭaṉ kūṭiyatu* excellent manuscript; endowed with commentary

***Paripāṭal*: 5+1**

Cāminātaiyar 1918 as summarised in Gros 1968:

1. ms. appartenant au Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉam dont manquent les premiers et derniers feuillets contient la fin du com. du première poème et conduit jusqu'au com. du v. 38 du poème XIX.
2.+3. deux mss. aquis par SA. chez Te. Lakṣmaṇakavirāyar d'Āḻvārtirunakari, copies l'un sur l'autre, et tous les deux en assez mauvais état, constituent la base de l'édition. Ils contiennent le texte et le commentaire des poèmes II à XXII (incomplet). Ils sont aujourd'hui conservés dans la Bibliothèque Swaminathaiyar à Adyar (no 247 et 1077).
4. ms. de deux feuillets appartenant au maṭh de Tarumapura ātīṉam contient le poème V avec l'indication du nom de Parimēlaḻakar pour auteur du commentaire.
5. ms. de deux feuillets (teste seul) a été donné à SA. par Rā. Irākavaiyaṅkar, poète du Ramnad.

Table 9: Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940, Paripāṭal



Table 10: Vaiyāpurippiḷḷai 1940, *Pattuppāṭṭu*

nūl	*ēṭu allatu kaṭitam*	*uriyavar*	*kuṟippu*
text	material	proprietor	significance
Pattuppāṭṭu			
mūlam muḻuvatum	*kaṭitam*	*Kā.Rā. Namacivāya Mutaliyār*	*ciṟanta pirati*
full text	paper	(individual)	excellent ms.
Tirumuru.			*mūlapāṭam*
muḻupirati	*ēṭu*	*Em.Pi.Es. Turaicumai Mutaliyār*	
complete ms.	palm-leaf	(individual)	text only
Porun.			
muḻupirati	*ēṭu*	*Ampalavāṇak Kavirāyar*	*uraiyuṭaṉ*
complete ms.	palm-leaf	(individual)	with commentary
muḻupirati	*kaṭitam*	*Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam*	*uraiyuṭaṉ*
complete ms.	paper	GOML	with commentary
Ciṟup.			
muḻupirati	*ēṭu*	*Ampalavāṇak Kavirāyar*	*uraiyuṭaṉ*
complete ms.	palm-leaf	(individual)	with commentary
muḻupirati	*kaṭitam*	*Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam*	*uraiyuṭaṉ*
complete ms.	paper	GOML	with commentary



Table 11: *Kuṟuntokai*: 9+5+4 [112]

material	provenance	state	identification[112]	no°
Cāminātaiyar 1937				
palm-leaf	Tirunelvēli Ampalavāṇa Kavirāyar		UVSL 1075?	1
palm-leaf	Mantit Tōppu Maṭam		basis of UVSL 183?	2
palm-leaf	Ceṅkōl Maṭam – only seen!	incomplete	var. of UVSL 183?	3
paper	Tirumayilai Vitvāṉ Caṇmukam Piḷḷai		UVSL 184?	4
palm-leaf	Cōṭacāvatāṉam Cupparāya Ceṭṭiyar			5
palm-leaf	Toḻuvūr Vēlāyuta Mutaliyār			6
palm-leaf	Ceṉṉai Irācaṅkattup Kaiyeḻuttu Puttakacālai = GOML			7
paper	Putukōṭṭai Rātākiruṣṇaiyar		UVSL 185+186?	8
paper	Tirukōṇamalai Ti.Ta. Kaṉakacuntaram Piḷḷai		GOML D.224?	9
Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940				
palm-leaf	Maturait Tamiḻ *Caṅkam*	complete with variants	lost	1
paper	Ti.Ta. Kaṉakacuntaram Piḷḷai	complete with variants	GOML D.224?	2
paper	Rā. Rākavaiyaṅkār	complete with variants		3
paper	Mutturattiṉa Mutaliyār	complete with variants		4
paper	Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam = GOML	complete with variants	GOML R.5751/ TR.1072	4
Caṇmukam Piḷḷai 1985				
paper	London [British Library]	dated 1894	BL Or.2726	1

material	provenance	state	identification[112]	no°
paper	Aṇṇāmalaip Palkalaikkaḻakam, copy by Rā. Rākavaiyaṅkār	dated 1899, Maturai		2
palm-leaf	Maturaip Pulavar Iḷaṅkumaraṉ	*kuṟippu*		3
paper	Srī Aṭikaḷ Āciriyar	226 songs		4

Table 12: *Naṟṟiṇai*: 7+5+4

material	provenance	significance	identification	No°







material	provenance	state	identification	No°
palm-leaf	Yāḻppāṇattu Vaṇṇainakar Cuvāmināta Paṇṭitar	with comm.		5
Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940				
palm-leaf	Maturait Tamiḻ *Caṅkam*	incomplete, endowed with commentary	lost	1
paper	Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam = GOML	incomplete, endowed with commentary	GOML D.284	2
paper	Ti.Ta. Kaṉakacuntaram Piḷḷai	incomplete, text only	lost	3
paper	Maṉṉārkuṭi Cōmacuntaram Piḷḷai	incomplete, text only	lost	4

Table 15: *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*: 4+2+1+1

material	provenance	significance	identification	No°
Cāminātaiyar 1903				
ms.	Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉam	compl., text + kiḷavi	UVSL 173	1
ms.	Jē. Em. Vēluppiḷḷai F. M.U.	text + kiḷavi		2
ms.	Tirumayilai Vitvāṉ Caṇmukam Piḷḷai	text + kiḷavi		3
palm-leaf	Āḻvārtirunakari Tē. Lakṣmaṇa Kavirāyar	text + kiḷavi + old comm	UVSL 1075	4
Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940				
paper	Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam GOML	complete + endowed with commentary	GOML D.202?	1
paper	Ceṉṉai Aracāṅka Nūlnilayam GOML	complete + endowed with commentary	GOML D.203?	2
Catacivaiyar 1944				
paper	Karaveṭṭimēṟku metaṭist tamiḻp pāṭacālait talaimai āciriyar Tiruvāḷar A. Tā. Cuppiramaṇiyam	compl. with comm.	lost	1
Turaicāmip Piḷḷai 1957				
ms.	Cīrkaḻi Kōvintacāmi Reṭṭiyar	additional lines		1

Table 16: *Patiṟṟuppattu*: 6+2



material	provenance	state	identification	No°
palm-leaf	Mayilai Rāmalinkampiḷḷai			10
Aṉantarāmaiyar 1925+1931				
palm-leaf	U.Vē. Cāminātaiyar		UVSL 511/224	1
palm-leaf	U.Vē. Cāminātaiyar		UVSL 5/225	2
Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940				
palm-leaf	Nellai, Ampalavāṇak Kavirāyar	complete, excellent ms., with commentary		1
paper	Pavāṉantar Kaḻakam, Ceṉṉai	incomplete, excellent ms., with commentary	GOML R.5783/ TR.1112	2

Table 18: *Paripāṭal*: 5+1

material	provenance	state		No°
Cāminātaiyar 1918 (found in Gros 1968)				
palm-leaf	Tiruvāvaṭuturai Ātīṉam	1–38, with comm., first and last f. missing	TAM 75	1
palm-leaf	Āḻvārtirunakari Te. Lakṣmaṇakavirāyar	2–32	UVSL 247	2
palm-leaf	Āḻvārtirunakari Te. Lakṣmaṇakavirāyar	2–32 copy of former	UVSL 1077	3
palm-leaf	Tarumapura Ātīṉam maṭam	2 folios with Parimēlaḻakar's name	lost	4
palm-leaf	Ra. Irākavaiyaṅkar, poète du Ramnad	2 folios	lost	5
Vaiyāpurip Piḷḷai 1940				
paper	Ti.Ta. Kaṉakacuntaram Piḷḷai	2–22 with commentary	lost	1

Table 19: *Pattuppāṭṭu*: 11+6



II.3 Colophons and Library Information

Caṅkam manuscripts come with two types of colophons, found at the beginning, or at the end. This classification does not include the miniature commentaries on the poetic state of affairs that are called *kiḷavi* in the tradition. This is, however, often mistranslated as 'colophon' in secondary literature. The *kiḷavi* are found at the end of the individual poems, and are in their turn followed by the name of the author and the poem's number. Marginal intertitles, always on the left, are only found in palm-leaf manuscripts. They basically give short religious invocations or blessings, titles of texts and of sections (sometimes subsections) – as a rule at the beginning – and in some cases even a *pada* index. The end of a section (such as a decade) is sometimes announced in the running text. Paper manuscripts usually make use of layout devices to convey such information by inserting blank spaces, moving to the next page, or giving headings. Also for the *kiḷavi*-s the scribes make use of a variable group of set phrases. A rather exceptional practice seems to have been prefixing a head colophon to a small group of palm-leaf manuscripts;[113] in the paper manuscripts this gives way to an extended title page. Scribal end colophons containing information about the manuscript's date and provenance or the name of the copyist are rare. Such information is, especially in the case of paper manuscripts, more frequently found on the cover or title pages. Invocations and blessings as found at the end of most complete manuscripts (except, presumably, in some of the paper copies commissioned by the larger libraries such as the GOML) can be regarded as minimal scribal colophons.

However, fixed colophons (in the following referred to as "traditional colophon") are found at the end of most complete manuscripts. They explain the rationale of anthologisation (sometimes in verse form). In the case of the *Eṭṭuttokai*, they name the patron and the compiler of the anthology, and in the case of the *Pattuppāṭṭu*, the respective poet. Certain additions, such as (generic) references to the scribe, are variable, as are stray verses in the style of additional *kaṭavuḷ vāḻttu*-s. Auspicious phrases in the form of short religious benedictions, such as *kuruvē tuṇai* or *civamayam*, are found on title pages, in marginal intertitles, or at the end. It is most probable that at least some of these indicate the religious affiliation of the institution where the manuscript was copied. This is usually a Śaivite monastery, but we also find evidence of copyists with Vaiṣṇava affiliations.

II.3.1 List of Available Colophons (Not Containing the Fragmentary Mss.)

II.3.1.1 Eṭṭuttokai

Kuṟuntokai:

C1a [UVSL 1075]	traditional colophon









C11 [UVSL 1072]	title colophon
C12 [UVSL 1073]	
G1 [GOML D.1199/TD.76]	
G2 [GOML R.1236/TD.939]	trad. + scribal colophon
G3 [GOML D.1195/TD.316/D.525]	
G4 [GOML D.1196/TD.583]	
G5 [GOML D.1197/TD.584]	
G6 [GOML R.1269/TR.964]	traditional colophon
G7 [GOML R.5253]	
G8 [GOML R.2865/TR.1635]	
G9 [GOML R.2688/TR.1506]	title colophon
G10 [GOML R.2806/TR.1588]	
G11 [GOML R.5184/TR.2303]	colophon
G12 [GOML R.2929/TR.1669]	
G13 [GOML R.2970]	title colophon
G14 GOML [R.5503/TR.2435]	title colophon
T1 [ORIML Trivandrum 6272]	
T2 [ORIML Trivandrum 4108]	scribal colophon
T3 [ORIML Trivandrum 6389]	colophon
T4 [ORIML Trivandrum 8849A]	colophon
T5 [ORIML Trivandrum 11500]	
TU1 [TU Tañcāvūr 2391]	
TU2 [TU Tañcāvūr 2522-1]	
TU3 [TU Tañcāvūr 2522-2]	
SM1 [MSSML 227]	
SM2 [MSSML 823b]	
SM3 [MSSML 973]	title colophon
SM4 [MSSML 1587b]	
SM5 [MSSML 1607c]	title colophon

A1 [AUL Aṇṇāmalai 860]	title- and scribal colophon
I1 [IFP Pondy RE-04420]	colophon
I2 [IFP Pondy RE-25365]	scribal colophon
I3 [IFP Pondy RE-45898e]	colophon
I4 [IFP Pondy RE-47681a]	colophon
I5 [IFP Pondy RE-47752]	colophon
NL1 [NLK 3092]	not yet copied
NL2 [NLK 3152]	not yet copied
P1 [BN Paris 66]	colphon; catalogue date
P2 [BN Paris 67]	scribal colophon
P3 [BN Paris 28]	scribal colophon

Porunarāṟṟupaṭai:

C1 [UVSL 1074]	traditional colophon,
C2 [UVSL 579-B(=A)]	traditional colophon
C3 [UVSL 231a]	traditional colophon, scribal colophon
NL [NLK 3112]	not yet copied
G1 [GOML D.268]	traditional colophon

Ciṟupāṇāṟṟupaṭai:

C1 [UVSL 1074]	traditional colophon
C2 [UVSL 184-A]	traditional colophon
C3 [UVSL 579-A(=B)]	traditional colophon
C4 [UVSL 1070]	no information
C5 [UVSL [41-C]	traditional colophon, scribal colophon
C6 [UVSL 285]	no information
C7 [UVSL 166]	traditional colophon

NL [NLK 3112]	not yet copied
G1 [GOML D.266]	traditional colophon

Perumpāṇāṟṟupaṭai:

C1 [UVSL 1074]	traditional colophon
C2 [UVSL 184-B]	traditional colophon
C3 [UVSL 579-B]	traditional colophon
C4 [UVSL 231c]	no information
C5 [UVSL 166]	traditional colophon
NL [NLK 3112]	not yet copied
G1a+c [GOML D.267?]	traditional colophon
G1b [GOML D.120?]	traditional colophon

Mullaippāṭṭu:

C1 [UVSL 1074]	traditional colophon
C2 [UVSL 184-C]	traditional colophon
C3 [UVSL 579-C]	traditional colophon
NL [NLK 3112]	not yet copied
G1 [GOML D.234]	traditional colophon

Maturaikkañci:

C1 [UVSL 1074]	traditional colophon
C2 [UVSL 184-D]	traditional colophon
C3 [UVSL 579-D]	traditional colophon
C4 [UVSL 166-A]	no information







































III Transmissional History

> More accessible than archaeology, more tangible than ethnology, literary histories are culturally constructed narratives in which the past is reimagined in the light of contemporary concerns.
> (Blackburn 2000: 449)

III.1 The Invocation Stanzas (*kaṭavuḷ vāḻttu*)

Placing a verse of obeisance to a god at the beginning of a text is a pan-Indian custom. The Sanskrit term is *maṅgala*, "auspicious verse", the Tamil counterpart is *kaṭavuḷ vāḻttu*, "praise of the deity", later also *kāppu* ("protection"). Usually it is supposed to address the poet's chosen deity (Skt. *iṣṭadevatā*). This kind of short paratext has not attracted much scholarly attention.[120] The most important point to make from the perspective of manuscript studies is that, as is the case of most paratexts, the invocation stanza has a certain fluidity. For some texts, a traditionally accepted stanza has become more or less part of the transmission of the text itself. However, copyists have felt free to alter or even exchange such verses, or to add others; indeed there are manuscripts that have a whole row of invocations. The verses to be examined in this subchapter are of the former category, that is, verses firmly established as part of the text in question. Incidentally, in the case of the *Caṅkam* corpus there are, as already mentioned in the introduction, a series of stanzas that link parts of the corpus together and tell us something about the process of anthologisation.

III.1.1 *Kuṟuntokai* 1

The first poem that will be considered is not traditionally seen as an invocation stanza. It has been counted as No. 1 in the *Kuṟuntokai*. This little four-liner has been taken to be an Akam poem on the strength of the interpretation of the miniature commentary, the *kiḷavi*, which reads it as a refusal of the hero's gift on the part of a confidante: a gift of red flowers would be inauspicious. In fact the text contains neither a confidante (*tōḻi*) nor a hero (*talaivaṉ*), and not even a reference to plucking flowers.

KT 1: தோழி கையுறை மறுத்தது: The confidante refusing [the



நாகா நாறு நரந்தை நிரந்தன
ஆவு மாரமு மோங்கின வெண்கணுஞ்
சேவு மாவுஞ் செறிந்தன கண்ணுதல்
பாக மாளுடை யாள்பலி முன்றிலே.

nākām nāṟu narantam nirantaṉa.
āvum āramum ōṅkiṉa. eṇkaṇum
cēvum māvum ceṟintaṉa. kaṇ-nutal
pākam āḷ uṭaiyāḷ pali muṉṟilē.

Nāka and wild orange stand dense.
Āvu and sandal are high. Everywhere
crowd Cē and mango – in the front yard of offerings
for Her who is one half man, with an eye on [her] forehead.

Cilappatikāram 17.20

பாம்பு கயிறாக் கடல்கடைந்த மாயவன்
ஈங்குநம் ஆனுள் வருமேல் அவன்வாயில்
ஆம்பலந் தீங்குழல் கேளாமோ தோழீ.

pāmpu kayiṟ' ā kaṭal kaṭainta māyavaṉ
īṅku nam āṉ-uḷ varum-mēl avaṉ vāyil
āmpalam tīm kuḻal kēḷāmō tōḻī.

The dark/deceitful one who churned the ocean with a snake as a rope,
when he comes here among our cows, won't we hear
from his mouth the sweet bamboo flute, friend?

Cilappatikāram 24.8

சீர்கெழு செந்திலுஞ் செங்கோடுங் வெண்குன்றும்
ஏரகமு நீங்கா விறைவன்கை வேலன்றே
பாரிரும் பௌவத்தி னுளபுக்குப் பண்டொருநாள்
சூரமா தடிந்த சுடரிலைய வெள்வேலே.

cīr keḻu centilum ceṅkōṭum veṇkuṉṟum
ērakamum nīṅkā iṟai val kai vēl aṉṟē
pār irum pauvattiṉ uḷa pukkup paṇṭ' oru nāḷ























intention, without being told.
While many beaten drums sound, you dispelling many forms,
at the time [you] dance the Koṭukoṭṭi, will she [of the] high-curved broad hips
[and] a waist resembling a creeper give the melody taken [up]?
At the time [you] dance the Paṇṭaraṅkam, winning many vehement battles
by [your] strength, adorned with ashes, will she with soft shoulders touched by grace [and]
tresses in which bees sound give the ascending rhythm?
At the time you dance the skull dance, taking a skull in [your] palm,
tying the hide of the murderous tiger, while the Laburnum garland is rolling on [his] neck,
will she with a smile that adorns [her] breast give the beat in front [of you]?
that is to say,
while the young woman with glorious jewels
guards these: melody and rhythm and beat,
you keep dancing, not a small wealth for us.

Not only does the form betray a different time and origin of this verse, also its contents place it in a far more advanced stage in the development of devotional poetry. The mythology of Śiva is fully implemented and heavily Sanskritised, not only from the point of view of the narrative adopted, but also by the way of loan words (*caṭai, tiripuram, paṇṭaraṅkam, kāpālam*). As for morphology, it contains the Middle Tamil negative absolutive *kūṟāmal*.

This brings us back to the initial question of a plausible date for the series of invocations found with *KT*, *NA*, *AiN*, *AN* and *PN*.[125] To summarise the argument, metrically speaking these poems are completely on the conservative side and still written in *Caṅkam* style. From the point of view of contents, however, they are preceded by an earlier stage of theistic poetry, represented not only by *KT* 1, but also by a number of small hymns in the epic poem *Cilappatikāram*, a stage still uniconic and apparently under a taboo of addressing or describing the deity directly. This is no longer the case with our series, and the terms chosen to describe the deities, especially Śiva and Murukaṉ, with their flowers and garments, may well refer to images actually present at the place of worship, even if worship or, what is more, temple worship, is not yet mentioned. Still, the role played by Śiva as a main god brings them into the vicinity of the Śaivite bhakti corpus proper, the *Tēvāram*, with its fully established iconic temple ritual. A reasonable date to argue for might thus be the late 6th or early 7th century, that is, a time when the metrical memory



traditional ones are sometimes followed by auspicious phrases and/or blessings. Obviously this type of colophon can only be expected in cases where the transmission of the text has been intact. Accordingly, three texts within the *Eṭṭuttokai* whose ends have been lost come without a colophon, namely *Puṟanāṉūṟu*, *Patiṟṟuppattu* and *Paripāṭal*. The *Pattuppāṭṭu* seems to have come down to us with ten separate colophons, that is, one at the end of each song. There is no colophon for either of the hyper-anthologies; in the case of the *Eṭṭuttokai* there is not even evidence for a manuscript (or a manuscript series) that assembled all the eight texts. It stands to reason, however, that since anonymous verses enumerating the texts in the hyper-anthologies do exist, such colophons might once have existed (see the following sub-chapter).

III.2.1 *Eṭṭuttokai*

Kuṟuntokai:
C1 [UVSL 1075] im. 100, p. 92, 4 f.; C2 [UVSL 183] im. 409; C3 [UVSL 184] im. 215; G1 [GOML D.224] im. 130; G2 [GOML TR.1072/R.5751] im. 421, L1 [BL Or.2726], p. 116

> *kuṟuntokai muṟṟum* (G2: *muṟṟiṟṟu*). *ittokai muṭittāṉ pūrikkō. ittokai pāṭiya kavikaḷ irunūṟraivar.*
> *ittokai nālaṭic ciṟrellaiyākavu meṭṭaṭip pērellaiyākavun toṭukkap* (C2v, G2: *tokukkap*) *paṭṭatu.*
> [G2 stops here]
> *ōrāt' eḻutiṉeṉ āyiṉum oṇ-poruḷ*
> *ārāynt' uṇarnta* (C2v: *uṇarka*) *v-aṟivuṭaiyōr cīrāyntu*
> *kuṟṟaṅ kaḷaintu kuṟai-peytu vācittal*
> *kaṟṟaṟinta māntar kaṭaṉ.*
> *civamayam* (C2: */*). [L1 continues with a devontional stanza: *umalmēṉi vāliḻai* ...]
>
> The *Kuṟuntokai* (the collection of brief [poems]) is completed. This collection has been accomplished by Pūrikkō. The poets who have sung this collection [are] 205. This collection has been compiled [in poems] with 4 lines as the lower limit and 8 lines as the upper limit.
> Even if I have written thoughtlessly – considering the excellence, of those who have the knowledge gained from research on the bright subject matter to read/learn [them], removing mistakes [and] throwing out deficiencies [is] the duty of learned[128] people.[129]
> The essence of Śiva.

Naṟṟiṇai:





















































































explicitly religious text in the collection, has a special status. In Cāminātaiyar's edition there are ten plus two accompanying stanzas. But since there are many manuscripts, this number will increase considerably (as has been confirmed by the current editor Emmanuel Francis). According to a note, Cāminātaiyar collected all the additional verse material he could find in various sources. However, even the other nine songs are richer in satellite stanzas than the rest of the corpus. Each is endowed with at least one verse and in one case there are three, coming to a total of sixteen verses. Almost all of them have already been printed, except for one verse attached to the *Paṭṭiṉappālai* in one ms. (not every ms. contains all the verses, or even one verse per *pāṭṭu*).

Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai (12)
UVSL edition

1.

குன்ற மெறிந்தாய் குரைகடலிற் சூர்தடிந்தாய்
புன்றலைய பூதப் பொருபடையாய் – என்றும்
இளையா யழகியா யேறூர்ந்தா னேறே
உளையாயென் னுள்ளத் துறை.

kuṉṟam eṟintāy kurai kaṭaliṟ cūr taṭintāy
puṉṟalaiya pūtap poru paṭaiyāy – eṉṟum
iḷaiyāy aḻakiyāy ēṟ' ūrntāṉ ērē
uḷaiyāy eṉ uḷḷatt' uṟai.

You who have attacked the mountain, you who have cut down the demon in the roaring sea,
you who are a weapon battling against the low-headed *bhūta*[174] – always
being young, being beautiful, you the bull of the one who is mounted on a bull (i.e. the son of Śiva),

you without suffering, reside in my heart.

2.

குன்ற மெறிந்ததுவுங் குன்றப்போர் செய்ததுவும்
அன்றங் கமரரிடர் தீர்த்ததுவும் – இன்றென்னைக்
கைவிடா நின்றதுவுங் கற்பொதும்பிற் காத்ததுவும்
மெய்விடா வீரன்கை வேல்.

kuṉṟam eṟintatuvuṅ kuṉṟappōr ceytatuvum
aṉṟ' aṅk' amarar iṭar tīrttatuvum – iṉṟ' eṉṉai
kaiviṭā niṉṟatuvuṅ kal potumpiṉ kāttatuvum
meyviṭā vīraṅkai vēl.

Attacking the mountain and making a battle on the mountain
and ending there [and] then the affliction of the immortals
and standing without deserting me today and guarding the rocky grove
– the lance in heroic hands that does not swerve from truth.

3.

வீரவே றாரைவேல் விண்ணோர் சிறைமீட்ட
தீரவேல் செவ்வே டிருக்கைவேல் – வாரி
குளித்தவேல் கொற்றவேல் சூர்மார்புங் குன்றும்
துளைத்தவே லுண்டே துணை.

vīra vēl tārai vēl viṇṇōr ciṟaimīṭṭa
tīra vēl cev vēl tirukkai vēl – vāri
kuḷitta vēl koṟṟa vēl cūr mārpum kuṉṟum
tuḷaitta vēl uṇṭē tuṇai.

The heroic lance, the sharp[175] lance, the valorous lance
for saving the side of the celestials, the lance in an auspicious hand,
the lance bathed in water, the victorious lance, the lance that has pierced
the chest of the demon is [his] companion.

4.

இன்ன மொருகா லெனதிடும்பைக் குன்றுக்கும்
கொன்னவில்வேற் சூர்தடிந்த கொற்றவா – முன்னம்
பனிவேய் நெடுங்குன்றம் பட்டுருவத் தொட்ட
தனிவேலை வாங்கத் தகும்.

iṉṉam oru kāl eṉat' iṭumpai kuṉṟukkum
kol navil vēl cūr taṭinta koṟṟavā – muṉṉam
paṉi vēy neṭum kuṉṟam paṭṭuruva toṭṭa
taṉi vēlai vāṅka takum.

Who has yet once more shortened my suffering,
victorious one who has cut down the demon with [his] lance speaking of murder,
it is befitting to bow before [your] solitary lance
that has dug completely through the long mountain covered with dew.

5.

உன்னை யொழிய வொருவரையு நம்புகிலேன்
பின்னை யொருவரையான் பின்செல்லேன் – பன்னிருகைக்
கோலப்பா வானோர் கொடியவினை தீர்த்தருளும்
வேலப்பா செந்திவாழ் வே.

uṉṉai oḻiya oruvaraiyum nampu-kilēṉ
piṉṉai oruvaraiyāṉ piṉcellēṉ – paṉṉirukai
kōlappā vāṉōr koṭiya viṉai tīrtt' aruḷum
vēlappā centi vāḻvē.

I cannot long for anyone but you,
I won't follow in the wake of anybody else,
father of the staff with twelve hands, father of the lance, who has the grace
to end the bad karma of the celestials, life of Centi.

6.

அஞ்சு முகந்தோன்றி னாறு முகந்தோன்றும்
வெஞ்சமரி லஞ்சலென வேறோன்றும் – நெஞ்சில்
ஒருக்கா னினைக்கி னிருகாலுந் தோன்றும்
முருகாவென் றோதுவார் முன்.



















































aṟam pukal ***patiṟṟuppatt' aimpatōṭ' irupāṉ***
perum ***paripāṭalum kuṟuṅkali nūṟṟaim-***
patu *mutal ākiya navaiyaṟum kalaikaḷ.*
ak kālatt' avarkk' akattiyam ataṉoṭu
mikkām ilakkaṇam viḷaṅku tolkāppiyam.

The verses sung in the world so as to obtain greatness
beginning with the *Muttoḷḷāyiram*, *Naṟṟiṇai*, *Neṭuṅtokai*,
Akanāṉūṟu, *Puṟanāṉūṟu*,
Kuṟuntokai, *Ciṟṟicai*, *Pēricai*, with the *Vari*,
the duty-proclaiming *Patiṟṟuppattu*, seventy
great *Paripāṭal* and a hundred and fifty
short *Kali*, [were] blemishless [pieces of] art.
At that time, for them along with the *Akattiyam*
the excellent grammar [was] the shining *Tolkāppiyam*.

Let us recall the sequence of the old list: "*Neṭuntokaināṉūṟu*, and the *Kuṟuntokaināṉūṟu*, and the *Naṟṟiṇaināṉūṟu*, and the *Puṟanāṉūṟu*, and the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*, and the *Patiṟṟuppattu*, and a hundred and fifty *Kalis*, and seventy *Paripāṭals*, and the *Kūttu*, and the *Vari*, and the *Ciṟṟicai*, and the *Pēricai*." The new list opens with the *Muttoḷḷāyiram*, a work in praise of the kings of the three royal houses that certainly belongs to the first millennium and is sometimes named along with the eighteen minor classics. Again, its last great phase of popularity seems to have been the 15th century; what is preserved today of presumably once nine hundred stanzas, as mentioned above, has come down to us in the *Puṟattiraṭṭu*. The *Eṭṭuttokai* work that is missing is the *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*, perhaps with the intent of redressing slightly the balance between Akam and Puṟam within the corpus. It is also noticeable that the original sequence of the eight anthologies is interrupted by some lost treatises that have been thought to have dealt with music (*icai*). But a final judgement on this list will be reserved until the discussion of the list found in *Tamiḻ Nāvalar Caritai* (chapter III.4.6.1).

III.4.2.4 A Drought, a Poetic Manual, and a Commentary

Before engaging into a query concerning the narrative ramifications of the legend, a closer look at the rest of the story in the preamble to Nakkīraṉ's commentary is unavoidable. While a framework – the academies and their protagonists and works – is provided by the flood legend, the work of cultural adaptation, along with the basic literary motifs, is delegated to a story of resurrection after cultural upheaval. The end of a drought not only marks the beginning of fresh literary productivity, but the acquiring of the exegetical tools necessary to master the heritage.

The origin of the Kaḷaviyal

At that time the country of the Pāṇṭiyas went through a drought of twelve years. While it went on, and while hunger was increasing, the king called all the learned men [and] said: “Come, I can’t protect you; my land suffers greatly; you proceed on [any] way known to you; when the country [is] a country [again], remember me [and] come [back].” When he had said [so], after they all had left the king [and] gone away, twelve years passed by without counting. After they had passed rain fell abundantly in the country. After it had rained the king said, “Now since the country has become a country [again], bring [back] those proficient in the manuals,” [and], when he sent men out in all directions, they found [and] brought those proficient in the field of letters/syllables (*eḻuttu*) and in the field of words (*col*) and in the field of metre (*yāppu*), [but] they came [back] saying, “We haven’t found anywhere those proficient in the field of meaning/poetic constituents (*poruḷ*).” When they came, the king too was excessively anxious and kept saying, “What [is the good] of examining letters/syllables and words and metre without the meaning [provided] by the field of meaning/poetic constituents? If they say we don’t obtain the *Poruḷatikāram*, even if we obtain these [others] we don’t obtain [them]”, [and] he begins meditating on the fire-coloured god of Ālavāyil in Maturai. Thinking “What the hell! Great is the anguish come to the king. Since precisely that is within wisdom, it is our part to end that,” he made all these sixty aphorisms, engraved [them] into three copper-plates [and] put [them] beneath the altar.

After he had put [them there], the one who worshipped the god’s shrine, sweeping everywhere the god’s temple, sprinkling water, strewing flowers, [but] never sweeping with a broom beneath the altar, that day prompted by the god decided, “I will sweep with a broom” [and], to cool his mind, he swept with a broom; because [of the grace] of the one who put [them there], the plates went along with that broom. When they came forth the truth dawned upon him who had taken them along [and] looked at them: it showed itself to be a *Poruḷatikāram*. When it appeared, the brahmin meditated, “It is that our lord mercifully has made [these] upon perceiving that the king kept saying, after hearing what [the messengers] said, that he was anxious about the non-existence of a *Poruḷatikāram*,” [and] without going to his house he went [and] stood at the front-gate of the palace [and], after he had informed

the gate-keepers [and] the gate-keepers had informed the king, the king called the brahmin saying, “Please enter”, [and] as [the brahmin] went [and] entered, [the king] received [and] looked at what was shown [to him and] said: “A/the *Poruḷatikāram*! Fate [wills] it that our lord, upon seeing our misery, mercifully has made this,” and he looked in that direction [and] stood paying [his] reverence, [and] he had the academicians called [and], whereupon he said, “A/the *Poruḷatikāram*, made mercifully by our lord after he had seen our misery! Take this along [and] see to the meaning,” while they took it along [and] mounted the big bench of stone (*kal-mā palakai*) [and] examined [it], all of them saying that the commentary made by them was good, a few days went all by.

The viewing of the commentary on the *Kaḷavu-iyal*:

As [the days] went by, all of them agreed: “No matter how many comments we thus give, an agreement is not found; we will go to the king, bring it [before him] that it is necessary to grant us an arbitrator, [and] finally see that as the meaning which is said by him to be the meaning [and] that which is not said by him to be not,” [and] they went to the king. And the king went to meet [them], saying “What, have you seen the meaning for the manual?”, [and] when they said “In order to see that, it is necessary to grant us an arbitrator”, [and] when the king said “Come on, how can I find an arbitrator for you? You happen to be the [most erudite] forty-nine. There is no one to rival you, is there?”, they went [and] mounted the big bench of stone, [and] as they meditated “The king himself has said this, how can we obtain an arbitrator?,” [the thought] passed them, “He who made the treatise is the god of Ālavāyil with shining matted locks, isn’t he? He [is] the lord, he must be given us an arbitrator,” [and] when they lay prostate with “We shall lie prostrate,” in the middle of the night a voice sounding three times brought back harmony to them all, saying, “In this village there is the son of Uppūri Kuṭikiḻār, called Uruttiracaṉmaṉ, green-eyed, ruddy-haired; he [is] five years of age, he is a dumb child; when [you] without despising him for being thus take [him] along, put [him] on a seat, sit beneath [him and] comment on the meaning of the treatise, upon hearing a commentary that is true [his] tears will overflow [and his] body hair bristle; upon hearing a commentary that is not true he will be silent/indifferent; he is the god Kumāra (Murukaṉ-Skanda). He has appeared here

because of a curse." When [this] happened the entire *Caṅkam* got up, directly circumambulated the shrine of the gods, went to Uppūri Kuṭikiḻār, told him all these tidings, desired [of him], "The lord must grant [us] Uruttiracaṉmaṉ," carried [the child back], put white [clothes on him], made him wear white flowers, adorned [him] with white sandalwood, placed [him] on the big bench of stone, and when they sat beneath [him and] commented on the meaning of the treatise, he heard all the commentaries comment on the meaning [and] remained silent/indifferent; when Marutaṉ Iḷanākaṉār from Maturai commented [his] tears overflew just once [and his] body hair rose, afterwards when Kaṇakkāyaṉār's son Nakkīraṉār commented, [his] tears flew over with every Pada [and] he remained with body hair bristling. As [this] was [so], they took up shouting [and] said "We have obtained the true commentary on this manual."

Because of this, there are also those who say that the commentary on this manual has been made by Uppūri Kuṭikiḻār's son Uruttiracaṉmaṉ; [but] he did not make [it] – let us say he heard the true commentary. The commentary on the manual made by the feet of the lord of Ālavāyil in Maturai has been seen by Nakkīraṉ, [and it] was heard by Kumāracuvāmi (lord Murukaṉ), let us say. Now we shall talk of the way the commentary has come down [to us]:

The ways the commentary has come down:



















kuṟu-muṉi tēṟa neṭu maṟai virittōy
āṟu tiru eḻuttum kūṟu nilai kaṇṭu
niṉ tāḷ pukaḻunar kaṇṇuḷ polintōy,
maṇik kāl aṟiñar perum kuṭi tōṉṟi
iṟaiyōṉ poruṭku paraṇar mutal kēṭpa
perum tamiḻ viritta arum tamiḻ pulavaṉum
pāy pār aṟiya nīyē ātaliṉ

You who expounded the long Vedas so that they were clear to the short sage,
You who saw the allotted position of the six holy syllables
[and] prospered in the eyes of those who praise your feet,

because You are to be known on the extended earth
as a scholar of rare Tamil who,
appearing in the great family of those knowledgeable in the base of gems
expounded the great Tamil
of the lord’s poetics, for Paraṇar and so forth to hear.

Three events are mentioned in these lines: the instruction of Akattiyaṉ (traditionally called the “short sage”) by Murukaṉ, the god’s appearance in the academy, and his creating the commentary on the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ*.[217] Several aspects are puzzling here and show that the preamble cannot have been Kallāṭaṉār’s only source. First, the instruction of Akkatiyaṉ, the Tamil counterpart of the Vedic Agastya, is usually attributed to Śiva in person, but Akkatiyaṉ is taught Tamil, not the Vedas. While it goes without saying that any sage must know the Vedas, Akattiyaṉ’s special knowledge is of course in Tamil grammar, given the fact that he had composed the lost first Tamil grammar for the first academy. Secondly, the academy is not referred to directly here, but instead we are given a simile for the academicians. They are called “those knowledgeable in gem lore” (*maṇik-kāl aṟiñar*), which can only be understood as an extension of the familiar metaphor of a poem as a gem (visible for example in titles such as *Mummaṇikkōvai*, “string of three [types of] gems”, that is, poems in three different metres). This presupposes that the story of the *Caṅkam* was well enough known to be recognised through a mere playful hint. Thirdly, Murukaṉ is hailed here as the one who has explained the lord’s (Śiva’s) treatise on poetics, that is, he has apparently created a commentary. Now this is clearly not in line with the story told in the preamble, where Murukaṉ is only present as the five-year-old dumb boy Uruttiracaṉmaṉ who sanctions Nakkīraṉ’s commentary. Interestingly, however, shortly before the *paramparā* account at the end, the preamble mentions a

deviating opinion to the extent that Uruttiracaṉmaṉ was not the witness of the commentary, but its author (*eṉpārum uḷar*: "there are also those who say ..."). We might have to conclude that Kallāṭaṉār had access to this other source. Another small indication pointing in a similar direction might also be mentioned: Paraṇar being the first in the list of poets. Current versions start either with Kapilar or with Nakkīraṉ.

That Kallāṭaṉār, however, did not feel himself bound to one particular version of events can be seen from at least one later passage, where we find a lengthy account of the instructions in Tamil given to Akkatiyaṉ from the hands, or rather the mouth of Śiva:

Kallāṭam 63/66.16–26[218]

aru-maṟai vitiyum ulak' iyal vaḻakkum
karutt' uṟai poruḷum vitippaṭa niṉaintu
vaṭa-col mayakkamum varuvaṉa puṇartti
ain-tiṇai vaḻuvātu akap-poruḷ amutiṉai
kuṟu-muṉi tēṟavum peṟum mutal pulavarkaḷ
ēḻ-eḻu peyarum kōt' aṟa parukavum
pulaṉ neṟi vaḻakkiṉ puṇar ulakavarkkum
muṉ tavam perukkum mutal tāpatarkkum
niṉṟ' aṟint' uṇara tamiḻ peyar niṟutti
eṭuttu parappiya imaiyavar nāyakaṉ
mey tavam kūṭal

... in the truly penitential Kūṭal
of the leader of the immortals who established,
lifted [and] spread the name of Tamil, to be lastingly understood [and] perceived
by the first ascetic who made [his] penance increase before,
and by those of the world joined in the custom of the path of scholarship,
to be absorbed without rest by the seven [times] seven persons,
the first poet-scholars who obtained, to be made clear by the short sage,
the nectar of love poetics that does not swerve from the five settings,
having thought in a regular manner of the rules in the rare Vedas,
the custom natural to the world and the meaning resting in intention,
having joined those who come from a mixture with northern words.

Here we have a description of Kūṭal, or Maturai, as the seat of Śiva. He teaches Tamil to the “first ascetic” Akattiyaṉ and to “seven times seven” scholars living in this world, that is, the forty-nine members of the third academy located in Maturai. To them he gave the “nectar of love poetics that does not swerve from the five settings”, once again his own Akam poetics (*akapporuḷ*), which begins with the worlds *aṉpiṉ aintiṇai*, “the five settings of love”. The rest of what is said about the treatise is in part surprising and in part not completely clear. The manual seemingly is explained to the academicians by the “short sage” (*kuṟu-muṉi*), which is, as already mentioned, a well-established designation for Akattiyaṉ. But since this sage is also mentioned again as the ascetic taught by Śiva, one wonders if Kallāṭaṉār did not want to make a playful allusion necessitating a literal reading of *kuṟu-muṉi*, namely as Murukaṉ who was brought, in the form of a five-year-old boy, to the assembly to judge the commentary. In this case, we can see here a confirmation of the statement found in the invocation cited above, according to which Murukaṉ not only confirmed the commentary made by Nakkīraṉ, but gave the explanation in person. If we want to read *kuṟu-muṉi* in its usual sense, we have to accept that it was Akattiyaṉ who explained the treatise. To be sure, this sounds anachronistic even from the point of view of the legend, since Akattiyaṉ is supposed to have lived and written his grammar at the time of the first academy, and his text is said to have been lost in the interval between the second and third *Caṅkam*.

The allusion to the “the rules in the rare Vedas” presumably refers to the famous explanation of *kaḷavu*, “secret love” as a Gandharva marriage. This is, as one of the eight types of marriage established in late Vedic literature, as it is presented in the first *sūtra* of the treatise. The mention of “custom natural to the world” seems to be part of the detailed exposition in Nakkīraṉ’s commentary of these eight types of marriage and the forms they take in the Tamil land. This implied meaning is for the moment enigmatic to me. The reference to the intermixture of Sanskrit words may well again refer to the first *sūtra* of the *IA*, where we find a Tamilised *kantaruvam* for the Sanskrit word *gandharva-*. It is true that there were several consecutive phases in the history of Tamil literature during which Indo-Aryan loan words were regarded as undesirable. A case in point is the parallel *sūtra* in the *Tolkāppiyam* (*TP* 89i), where the word *kantaruvam* is avoided and replaced by a complicated Tamil simile (Wilden 2006b: 97f.). However, for the time being no study has been made of the language policy followed by the *Kallāṭam* itself.

An even more explicit reference to the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ* as a gift of Śiva to the Pāṇṭiya king and the academy is found in stanza 3, again in a simile that contains a description of Maturai and its divine lord.

Kallāṭam 3.10–18

ulak' iyal niṟuttum poruḷ marapu oṭuṅka
māṟaṉum pulavarum mayaṅk' uṟu kālai
munt' uṟum peru maṟai muḷaitt' aruḷ vākkāl
aṉpiṉ ain-tiṇai eṉṟu aṟu-patu cūttiram
kaṭal amutu eṭuttu karaiyil vaittatu pōl
parappiṉ tamiḻ cuvai tiraṭṭi maṟṟ' avarkku
teḷi tara koṭutta teṉ tamiḻ kaṭavuḷ
taḻal kaṇ tarakkiṉ carumam āṭaiyaṉ
kūṭalam perum pati kūṟār kiḷai eṉa

like the relatives who did not talk of the great lord of Kūṭal,
the one whose garment is the hide of a tiger with fiery eyes,
the god of southern Tamil who gave, for it to be clear,
to them, gathering the taste of extensive Tamil,
like the ambrosia lifted out of the ocean [and] put on the shore,
the sixty *sūtra*-s [beginning with] "*aṉpiṉ aintiṇai*"
by words of grace, sprung out of the great Vedas that have priority,
at a time when the Pāṇṭiya and the scholars were confused,
for the use of poetics to be retained that establishes the nature of the world

Here the situation seems to be the one familiar from the preamble to Nakkīraṉ, namely the moment after the drought when no poetic manual could be found. Śiva sends help in form of the *IA* in sixty *sūtra*-s, still the number of aphorisms in today's treatise, the first beginning with the words "*aṉpiṉ aintiṇai*".

One more passage of interest has to be mentioned. It is similar to the one quoted from Appar's *Tēvāram* in referring to Tarumi, the poor Brahmin boy who went to the academy with a poem he was given by Śiva (whose story we will see in greater detail in the next chapter on the Maturai *Purāṇams*).

Kallāṭam 1.11–14

koṅku tēr vāḻkkai cem tamiḻ kūṟi
poṉ kuvai tarumikku aṟp' uṭaṉ utavi
eṉ uḷam kuṭikoṇṭu irum payaṉ aḷikkum
kaḷ aviḻ kuḻal cēr karuṇai em perumāṉ









once installed in the academy hall, the plank or bench grows enough to have room for any number of true poets trying to sit on it. When, after years of composing, the poets are unable to sort out their various works that have become all mixed up on the floor of the hall, Śiva appears among them as a scholar and lends his assistance, for which he is accepted into the academy. In order to avoid such problems in future, he composes a poetological treatise for them, i.e., the *Iṟaiyaṉār (Akap) poruḷ*. After some dispute, Nakkīraṉ's commentary on this work is accepted by the assembly. So far the first story.

In the second story the Pāṇṭiya king has perceived a wonderful perfume exuding from the hair of his beloved wife. Intrigued by his perception he hangs up a purse of gold at the entry to the academy hall and promises it as a reward to the poet who is able to compose a poem about what is going on in his mind. Needless to say the poets fail. However, upon the request of an unlearned, poor and yet devout Brahmin boy named Tarumi, Śiva composes a poem addressed to a bee, asking it whether it has ever smelled flowers as fragrant as the hair of the beloved, starting with the words *koṅku tēr vāḻkkai* (= *Kuṟuntokai* 2). Bringing a palm-leaf with the poem into the assembly, Tarumi is declared victorious. When he is about to cut down the gold purse, Nakkīraṉ stands up claiming that the poem has a fault. In order to back up his protégé, Śiva appears in the assembly and demands to know who has slighted his poem. Nakkīraṉ admits his reserve, and a discussion between the lord and the poet evolves regarding the question whether it is possible to describe the natural fragrance of hair as similar to the smell of a flower. Nakkīraṉ claims that hair can only be artificially fragrant, so that the question to the bee does not make sense. If hair is fragrant, it is from flowers or other such ingredients of a perfume applied to it. When Nakkīraṉ denies any other possibility, even for the hair of a divine woman such as Śiva's consort Gaurī, Śiva is exasperated by his persistence and finally reveals his identity, showing the fiery third eye on his forehead. Nakkīraṉ persists and utters the famous sentence: "Even if you were to have eyes all over your body, a fault remains a fault!" Burnt by Śiva's wrath, the hapless poet is forced to seek refuge in the lotus tank in front of the hall.

The third story deals with the regret of the other academy poets about having lost Nakkīraṉ. They decide to ask Śiva to forgive the delinquent, luring him with the announcement that Nakkīraṉ had spent his time in the tank by composing a poem in praise of the lord. Śiva descends into the tank, listens to Nakkīraṉ's verses, and is so pleased that he lifts him out of the water with his own hand and reinstalls him in the academy.

However, in the fourth story he is troubled by Nakkīraṉ's lack of true grammatical and poetical knowledge. When worrying his divine mind with the question who could instruct Nakkīraṉ, Pārvatī steps in

and reminds Śiva how, upon the gathering of divine beings and Śaiva devotees around Śiva's abode at Mount Kailās, the earth had tilted and the southern part was lifted into the air. In order to restore the balance, Śiva had sent the sage Akattiyaṉ southwards to sit on Mount Potiyil. Before departing Akattiyaṉ had asked to be instructed in Tamil, which Śiva had done thoroughly. So Akattiyaṉ is called back as the ideal tutor for Nakkīraṉ. Upon Pārvatī's question why Śiva had declined to teach Nakkīraṉ in person, the god answered that due to the envy he had displayed on a former occasion, Nakkīraṉ had proved himself unworthy of being the god's direct disciple. Being perfectly instructed in Tamil by Akattiyaṉ, however, Nakkīraṉ is now capable of taking up his work in the academy with renewed zeal.

But now, in the fifth story, a quarrel has arisen within the academy as to whose poems should be the ones most worthy to be preserved. Śiva, again asked for his mediation, recommends Skanda as a judge, who due to a curse had been born as a dumb boy to a merchant from a nearby village. Put in the academy hall and subjected to a recitation of all the poetry that had been produced, the five-year-old child sheds tears of joy upon hearing the poems of the great trio Kapilar, Nakkīraṉ and Paraṇar, thus proving them to be the best.

The sixth story is not directly related. A later Pāṇṭiya king refuses to accord honours to Iṭaikkāṭaṉ, a stranger poet who is a friend of Kapilar and who has come to recite his works in front of the king. Insulted by this unjust refusal, he seeks refuge in the lord, who decides to teach the Pāṇṭiya king a lesson. Removing his Liṅga from the temple in Maturai and taking the academy with him, Śiva settles outside the town on the banks of the Vaikai and manifests himself in a new Liṅga. Learning of the incident, the Pāṇṭiya walks by foot to the new Liṅga in order learn from the lord what was his offence and how he could do penance. Śiva points out his impolite behaviour against Iṭaikkāṭaṉ. The king promises to make amends, Śiva and the academy return to Maturai, leaving the other Liṅga behind as the core of a new temple, and the king seats Iṭaikkāṭaṉ in the academy with all honours.

III.4.4.1 Nampi's Tiruviḷaiyāṭaṟpurāṇam

Told like this, we seem to have a fairly consistent series of stories. But if we begin to pay attention to the details and ramifications in the various versions, we see in fact that we are dealing with a cluster of stories, some half-remembered variations of the same event, that have undergone a gradual process of streamlining and rationalisation. The most interesting is the version of Nampi, whose text represents the first attempt to build a larger structure. From the few remaining ragged edges of the pieces he has woven into a whole, we are able to glean a few bits of real information, not concerning the history of our corpus necessarily, but certainly about the way it was perceived in particular periods, and about the ways various sources

narratives that follow, were it not for the *deus ex machina* solution of the human problem. Also the rest of this chapter (vv. 12–19) looks rather like an alternative account of the events connected with the establishment of the second poetological treatises, the *Iṟaiyaṉar Akapporuḷ*, a text still called by name in this version, then loan-translated by the *HM* as *Arthādhikāra*, lost in all the later versions.

Another time gap is announced by the phrase "once upon a time" (*oru kālam*) –it is ironic that Nampi should be so precise with respect to discontinuities, he who was famously not yet concerned with the chronology of the sixty-four sports. Here the poets are sitting, presumably still on the *palakai*, analysing poetry, and discussing poetics. Śiva, listening in, realises that they are confused and "shows" (*kāṭṭu*) them, does not give them, "a lofty treatise in poetics, starting with 'the five settings of love'" (*ōṅkiya poruḷ nūl 'aṉpiṉ ain tiṇai' eṉṟu eṭuttu*), and again sorts out the poems that follow his poetics (v. 12). Now the poets start looking back at their own poems and try to decide how well they correspond to what they have just heard. Nakkīraṉ for one finds his own works incomparable, but there is disagreement (v. 13). Luckily Nakkīraṉ finds a means to stop the quarrel: he comes up with a palm-leaf, a written version of the poetics made by god,[232] and he challenges everybody with producing a commentary (v. 14). Nakkīraṉ's commentary is graced with a smile and recommended to the others by Śiva (v. 15f.). Reinforced by a voice from heaven, this is the commentary that is accepted (v. 17 f.). The name of the treatise is revealed at the very end (v. 19): "What shines as *Poruḷatikāram* is called '*Iṟaiyaṉār Poruḷ*'" (*poruḷatikāram piṟaṅkiṟṟ' iṟaiyaṉār poruḷ eṉavē*).

It is with Nampi's second story that the actual devotional series begins. As far as the narrative core is concerned, stories 2 to 4 – recounting the poetic competition started by the Pāṇṭiya king, Tarumi's victory with the help of Śiva, the dispute between Nakkīraṉ and the lord, Nakkīraṉ's disgrace and resurrection, and finally his instruction in Tamil on the hands of Akattiyaṉ – are the most stable part. Here poets only vie with each other with respect to flowery detail. In fact they could be counted as one single story. Again there is a textual reason to assume that such was Nampi's attitude in the matter. If we follow the lead of his temporal specifications, we find that the phrases of the type already mentioned ("once upon a time", *ōr* or *oru kālam* and the like) are used sparingly. They occur in the first verse of chapter 15 (and then two times further within that chapter, as has been pointed out), at the beginning of chapters 16, 19 and 20, but not in chapters 17 and 18. There the thread of narration is continuous.

An interpretation of the main ideological concern in the story of Tarumi and Nakkīraṉ has already been formulated by Shulman (2001a), in a subchapter with the title "Pedantry versus Poetry": it would have been the overthrow of the petrified scholastic tradition of













































which the Pāṇṭiya king hurls his spear at the ocean for its trying to encroach on Pāṇṭiya land, he adds, after a noncommittal “and by other ways” (*piṟarvāṟṟāṉum*), two more passages. One is well known but the other has given rise to speculation. The first is “from the commentary on the *Iṟaiyaṉār Poruḷ*[290] written by Nakkīraṉ, the son of Kaṇakkāyaṉār” (*kaṇakkāyaṉār makaṉār nakkīraṉār uraitta iṟaiyaṉār poruḷ uraiyāṉum*). This is, presumably, the preamble to the text known to us, since it is the only part of the text that provides any information about the academies. The second is “from the preface of the great Iḷampūraṇar, who is [also called] Uraiyāciriyar, the teacher of the commentary” (*uraiyāciriyar ākiya iḷampūraṇavaṭikaḷ mukavuraiyāṉum*).

Since no mention is made of the name of the text for which the commentator Iḷampūraṇar wrote his preface, Aravamuthan (1930: 300–303) – followed by Zvelebil (1973a: 121) – has concluded that it must have belonged to the same text. In other words, there would have been once a second, now lost commentary on the *IA* from the hand of Iḷampūraṇar that also contained an account of the *Caṅkam* legend. This, in turn, would explain why Iḷampūraṇar, in his commentary on the *Tolkāppiyam*, refers to the treatise *IA*, but not to the commentary written by Nakkīraṉ. This conclusion, however, is based on slim evidence. Given the fact that two important bits of information, namely the boundaries of the Tamil land and the name of the king in whose assembly the *Tolkāppiyam* was presented, are not found in the preamble to Nakkīraṉ but are found in the preface (*pāyiram*) to the *Tolkāppiyam*, it seems much more reasonable to conclude that Aṭiyārkkunallār referred to the poem known as a *pāyiram* by the alternate word *mukavurai*, and attributed its authorship to Iḷampūraṇar.[291] In this case, the other two names of Pāṇṭiyas belonging to the second and third academy would have to be attributed to the unnamed other sources.

An additional argument that is brought forward by Aravamutham (1930: 300–303) is a passage from Pērāciriyar’s commentary on *Marapiyal* 649 (which will be given in full below), where he discusses the authority of the *Tolkāppiyam*. Pērāciriyar claims absolute authority for the *Tolkāppiyam* by referring to two of his predecessors:

> *kaṭaiccaṅkattāruṭ kaḷaviyal poruḷ kaṇṭa kaṇakkāyaṉār makaṉār nakkīrar “iṭaicaṅkattārkkuṅ kaṭaiccaṅkattārkkum nūl āyiṟṟut tolkāppiyam” eṉṟār ākalāṉum, piṟkālattārkku urai eḻutiṉōrum atu kūṟik karipōkkiṉār ākalāṉum, avar pulavut tuṟanta nōṉpuṭaiyār ākalāṟ poy kūṟār ākalāṉum eṉpatu.*
>
> Because Nakkīrar, the son of Kaṇakkāyaṉār who saw the meaning of the *Kaḷaviyal* of those of the last *Caṅkam*, has said: “The treatise for those of the middle *Caṅkam* and for

> those of the last *Caṅkam* [was] *Tolkāppiyam*", and because he who has written the commentary for those of later times has also taught [and] given testimony to that, and because he, since he had the strength to abandon meat, does not teach falsehood.

Here Aravamuthan identifies the second commentator as Iḷampūraṇar, and since, just as in Aṭiyārkkunnallār, the text he has commented on for posterity is not mentioned, Aravamuthan concludes that this must be another reference to Iḷampūraṇar's lost commentary on the *IA*. Everything falls into place, however, when we think of another text that is actually the text under discussion, namely the *Tolkāppiyam*: both Nakkīraṉ and Iḷampūraṇar testify to the authority of the *Tolkāppiyam*, the former by mentioning it as the treatise of the second and third *Caṅkam*, and the latter by writing a commentary on all three parts of the text.

The context of the discussion in Pērāciriyar is a sort of discourse on the principles of poetry and grammatical theory (*ilakkaṇam*). It is appended to the *Marapiyal* and, this chapter being the last of the *TP*, to the work as a whole. It enumerates the various types of treatises and commentaries, as well as the objects and means of commentating, and culminates in a list of the thirty-two maxims of argumentation, the *tantiravutti*, which is a Tamil adaptation of the Sanskrit term *tantray-ukti* (Chevillard 2009b). The relevant *sūtra* is found fairly close to the beginning; it deals with the qualities of the author of the primary treatise (*mutal nūl*). This primary work is understood as the first formulation of the theoretical principles of a domain, the root text for all that is to follow. Clearly the point here is to invest the first author with the necessary authority to carry the weight of a whole tradition.[292] After paraphrasing the *sūtra* and elaborating on some of its morpho-syntactic and semantic properties, there follows an extensive exposition on the implications of authority.

Pērāciriyar on *Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram* 649p

> *iṉi muṉaivaṉāṟ ceyyappaṭuvat' ōr nūl illai y-eṉpār; avaṉ vaḻit tōṉṟiya nalluṇarvuṭaiyār avaṉpāṟ poruḷ kēṭṭu mutaṉūl ceytār eṉavum, ammuṉaivaṉ muṉṉar ākamattup piṟantat' ōr moḻiyaippaṟṟi aṉaittup poruḷuṅ kaṇṭu piṉṉar avaṟṟavaṟṟiṟku nūl ceytār avar eṉavum, avvākamattiṉaiyē piṟkālattārum oḻukkam vēṟupaṭun-tōṟum vēṟupaṭuttu vaḻinūluñ cārpunūlum eṉap palavuñ ceytār eṉavuṅ kūṟupa. avai evvāṟṟāṉum muṟṟa uṇarntōr ceyta nūl aṉmaiyiṉ avai tēṟappaṭā; allatūum, avai tamiḻnūl aṉmaiyiṉ īṇṭu ārāycci y-ila v-eṉpatu.*

maṟṟu, mēlaic cūttirattu nutaliya neṟiyāṉē mutalum vaḻiyum ām eṉavē, ellārkkum mutalvaṉ āyiṉāṉ ceytatu mutaṉūlē y-ām enpatu peṟutum ākaliṉ, īṇṭu ic cūttiraṅ kūṟiyat' eṉṉai y-eṉiṉ, – tāmē talaivar āvārum attalaivarai vaḻippaṭṭut talaivar āyiṉārum palar ākaliṉ tāmē talaivar āyiṉār nūl ceyyiṉ mutaṉūl āvat' eṉiṉ, – aṟṟ' aṉṟu: tāmē talaivar āyiṉār muṟkālattut tamiḻnūl ceytilar ākaliṉ talaivar vaḻiniṉṟu talaivaṉ ākiya akattiyaṉāṟ ceyyappaṭṭatum mutaṉūl eṉpatu aṟivittaṟkum, piṟkālattup perumāṉaṭikaḷ kaḷaviyal ceytāṅkuc ceyyiṉum piṟkālattāṉum mutaṉūl āvat' eṉpatu aṟivittaṟkum, aṅṅaṉam 'viṉaiyi ṉīṅki viḷaṅkiya aṟiviṉāṉ mutaṉūl ceytāṉ' eṉpatu aṟivittaṟkum itu kūṟiṉāṉ eṉpatu. eṉavē, akattiyamē muṟkālattu mutaṉūl eṉpatūum, ataṉ vaḻitt' ākiya tolkāppiyam ataṉ vaḻinūl eṉpatūum peṟṟām.

However, when it is said that according to the path proclaimed in the above *sūtra*, there are a primary [treatise] and a secondary [treatise], because we might conclude that the primary treatise is what was made by the one who was the first of them all, if one says "why is this *sūtra* taught here?" – if one says "because only they are authorities and many have become authorities following those authorities (i.e. of the *mutal-nūl*), if a treatise has been made by those who are authorities, it is the primary treatise" – that is not so: because those who were the authorities in former times did not make a treatise on Tamil. He (Tolkāppiyaṉ) taught this in order to make known that the primary treatise has been made by Akattiyaṉār, who was the authority following [those] authorities, and in order to make known that, even if it was made in later times, like the *Kaḷaviyal* having been made by the great lord (Śiva), it is the primary treatise even for later times, and in order to make known the dictum "he with knowledge that shines after he has left behind [former karmic] deeds made the primary treatise". Finally, we conclude that the primary treatise of former times [is] the *Akattiyam* and that the secondary treatise of that [is] the *Tolkāppiyam*, which is its sequel.

eṉṟārkku muntunūl eṉappaṭṭaṉa muṟkālattu vīḻntaṉa v-eṉak kūṟit tolkāppiyar akattiyattoṭu piṟaḻavum avaṟṟu vaḻinūl ceytār eṉṟakkāl iḻukk' eṉṉai y-eṉiṉ, – atu vēta vaḷakkoṭu māṟukoḷvār ikkālattuc colliṉum, iṟanta kālattup piṟa pācāṇṭikaḷum mūṉṟu vakaic caṅkattu nāṅku































































Comm.	***Kuṟiñcip.***
Iḷ.	|| 8ab, 239ab
Cēṉ.	8, 239
Nacc.	|| 8, 152, 172, 239a–c
Teyv.	8
Kall.	/
May.	/
Caṅk.	/
N.Vir.	/
Kūḻ.	/
IV	|| 8, 172, 239a–c
PV	/

17) Grammatical quotations from *Paṭṭiṉappālai*

Comm.	***Paṭṭiṉap.***
	Iḷ.
Cēṉ.	301
Nacc.	85, 4 ||
Teyv.	/
Kall.	/
May.	131 ff.
Caṅk.	/
N.Vir.	/
Kūḻ.	131+133
IV	|| 301
PV	283–184a

18) Grammatical quotations from *Malaipaṭukaṭām*

Comm.	***Malaip.***
Iḷ.	503ab, 177ab, 574, 576 || 49ab, 50, 82, 218, 268, 275, 374, 576ab
Cēṉ.	15, 50, 82f., 157, 275, 374, 561, 576
Nacc.	3, 33, 50, 145, 176f., 503ab, 574, 576 || 28, 82–83c, 112, 145, 169a–c, 249, 268, 402cd, 561, 576
Teyv.	23f., 82, 268, 374, 576
Kall.	28
May.	41, 50+65df.+157cd+218, 66, 275a–c (2), 352
Caṅk.	7, 41ab, 218, 275a–c
N.Vir.	7, 41ab, 218, 275a–c
Kūḻ.	141ab, 218, 275a–c
IV	50, 176f., 267c, 352, 374, 576 || 7, 15f., 41ab, 50, 82–83b,112, 157, 268, 275, 374 (2), 561
PV	/

III.5.3 Glimpses from Discussions of Literature

The statistics of quotations of poems has shown that the curve of development in grammar and poetics was similar, namely an inset coincidental with the first commentaries of about the 10th century, a steady rise in number up to the 14th century, peaking with Naccinārkkiṉiyar, and then a thinner but steady trickle in treatises on grammar, until, in the 17th century, the *Ilakkaṇa Viḷakkam* presents a synthesis of the earlier schools, which is also a testimony to a fresh interest in the old literature. Access to the original sources then seems to have been cut off quite suddenly in the 18th century, when grammatical commentators continue to use classical examples handed down over generations of texts, but no longer particularly accurately and without adding anything new. Why this is so is not immediately apparent, all the more so because the scholars writing the new treatises – *Ilakkaṇa Iḷakkam*, *Pirayōka Vivēkam* and *Ilakkaṇakkottu* (see below) – share a milieu and discourse horizon with the *Naṉṉūl* scholars continuing to produce commentaries. The *Naṉṉūl* scholars were part of the learned Śaiva circles, writing and

anthology, which belongs to the later *Kīḻkkaṇakku*, is attributed to the *Caṅkam* itself, the “Dramiḍa Sangha” – nevertheless this example shows that questions of Tamil poetics found some entry into the trans-regional discourse.

Another example of this is found, slightly later, in the *Līlātilakam*, the foundational text of the Kerala grammatical tradition. This anonymous text is generally dated to the late 14th century (Gopala Pillai 1985). It is a treatise on grammar in the extended sense, that is, including poetics, and is written in Sanskrit *sūtra*-s with a Sanskrit commentary. It provides numerous examples that allow a glimpse at the variety of Kerala local dialect called Maṇipravāḷam. The first chapter (*śilpa*) discusses the properties of the Maṇipravāḷam language (*bhāṣā*). In the context of distinguishing literary from worldly usage, the commentary contains a first reference to the *Caṅkam* corpus:[306]

> *te khalu cōḷa-pāṇḍyānāṃ viśeṣa-vyavahāre eva pattuppāṭṭu-eṭṭuttokai-ityādi-prabandhātmake bhavanti. na tu teṣāṃ sāmānya-vyavahāre.*
>
> (śilpa 1, comm., p. 284)
>
> Those [words] that have the nature of compositions such as *Pattuppāṭṭu* [and] *Eṭṭuttokai* are in the special usage of the Cōḷas and Pāṇḍyas only. But not in their common usage.

Pattuppāṭṭu and *Eṭṭuttokai* are mentioned here as sources for words found in special (= literary) usage. What is interesting is that here, the two hyper-anthologies are further characterised as belonging to the Cōḷas (= Cōḻas) and Pāṇṭiyas, that is, not to the Cēras. This means that at this point in time, the author, who is describing the language(s) of Kerala, implicitly rejects any Kerala share in the classical heritage. The *Caṅkam* corpus is still known, at least by the titles of the hyper-anthologies, but unlike in the case of Tamil grammatical treatises, where for all differences of opinion our corpus remains a point of reference for everybody, the Kerala grammar proceeds from a completely new model. A second passage answers the question, again implicitly, of what status should be accorded to Tamil classical literature. The point under discussion here is the designation Maṇipravāḷam – a literary language that mixes Sanskrit with elements of a local dialect – which is reserved for the literature of Kerala:

> *tannibandhanaṃ ca tatra tatra deśe bhāṣā-kāvyaṃ muktakam prabandho vā samasti. kintu teṣāṃ pattuppāṭṭu-ityādiḥ padam ityādiś ca saṃjñā; na tu*

kathañcid api maṇipravāḷam iti saṃjñā.

(*śilpa* 1, comm., p. 286)

And anywhere in the land there exists poetry in [regional] languages, stanza or composition. And the designation of any of them is "*Pattuppāṭṭu*" and so forth, "*Padam*" and so forth; but there not anything like the designation "Maṇipravāḷam".

Here the *Pattuppāṭṭu* has become an example of a genre of regional folk poetry, mentioned along with the *Padam* genre of Telugu. Again this does not look as if the text itself was still being read, although the *Līlātilakam* displays considerable knowledge of the Tamil grammatical tradition, including the *Tolkāppiyam* (Gopala Pillai 1985: 200 ff.). This state of affairs seems to foreshadow the one in which the Tamil tradition begins to see itself in the course of the 18th century. One text that has been blamed by more than one generation of Tamil scholars for playing a part in this process is the *Ilakkaṇakkottu* (*IK*), a treatise on what is closest, in traditional terms, to a partial treatment of *Col*, written by Cāmināta Tēcikar around the turn of the 17th to 18th century.

Zvelebil's verdict on this author comes out forcefully, while at the same time he calls in A. K. Ramanujan as a second witness (Zvelebil 1993: 147 f.):

A decisive factor for the ancient literature being hidden in the limbo of oblivion was the strong and lasting influence of militant Brahmanical Hinduism. Later medieval Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava scholars "apparently tabooed as irreligious all secular texts; they disallowed from study all Jain and Buddhist texts." [quote from Ramanujan 1985: xiii] Thus Cāmināta Tēcikar (17th–18th cent.), in the commentary on *Ilakkaṇakottu*, (7th aphorism; cf. also the *Pāyiram*), condemns the following books as unnecessary, indeed inferior writings which one should not read wasting one's time: "*Cintāmaṇi, Cilappatikāram, Maṇimēkalai, Caṅkappāṭṭu, Koṅkuvēḷ mākkatai, Pattuppāṭṭu, Eṭṭuttokai, Patiṉeṇkīḻkkaṇakku, Irāmaṉkatai, Naḷaṉkatai, Ariccantiraṉ katai*, etc." This list virtually contains almost all the best literary achievements of Tamil literature! On the other hand, the names of the quoted books show that, even at the beginning of the 18th century, the great classics were known at least to some scholars even if they were prohibited by influential fanatics such as Cāmināta Tēcikar.

This statement seems to be based solely on the period of auto-













































back to the *scriptio continua* of his source text.

The examples given in Illustrations 11–13 show us that caution must be taken when trying to transfer the three typological generations of manuscripts onto a temporal axis. It reveals that it was possible to have copyists of quite varying skills at a single place. In the various the regions, it may have been a matter of pure chance whether paper copies being requested were undertaken by competent hands. Still, it seems reasonable to assume that on the whole the *scriptio continua* paper copies are older than those with line- and *cīr*-splits, while the third generation brings us directly to the brink of editing for printed versions.

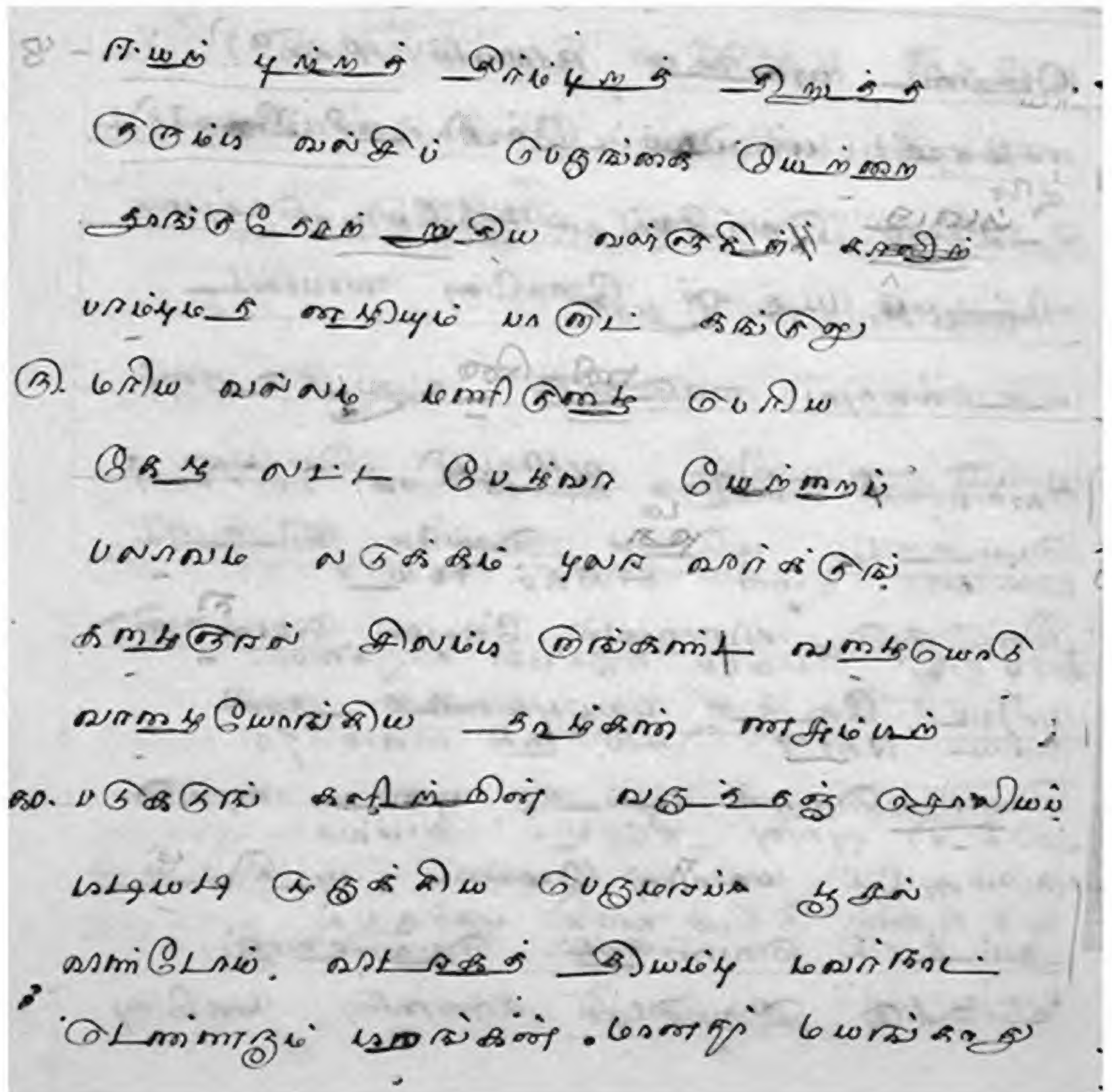


Illustration 14: UVSL 5, p. 13: *Akanāṉūṟu* 8

In the manuscript of the *Akanāṉūṟu* shown in Illustration 14 the transformation into a printable text is almost complete. Information

Illustration 16: UVSL 183, p. 25: *Kuṟuntokai* 24

Another purpose for this type of manuscript becomes visible in yet another UVSL copy of the *Kuṟuntokai* (Illustration 16). This one is the sole surviving testimony for the strand of witnesses upon which Cāminātaiyar's standard text is based. To begin with, it includes corrections, such as the one here in line 4 where *kaḷiṟu* has been corrected with *kuḷiṟu*. These corrections are the reading that was finally printed by Cāminātaiyar. Many of the interlinear variants are not attested elsewhere, which might best be explained by considering them notes from yet another manuscript to which the scribe had access, but could not borrow or buy.

The last example for this section (Illustration 17) is from a manuscript that definitely stands on the threshold of an edition. This can be seen by its printed title page, which states that it was put together "after studying [the text] from many manuscripts" (*palpala ēṭṭukaḷaik koṇṭu ārāyntu*). It is the work of Piṉṉattūr Nārāyaṇacāmi Aiyar, the first editor of the *Naṟṟiṇai*, dated to Cōpakirutu °v (= 1903/04 C. E.), and it presumably never reached the stage of being printed because of its author's untimely death. Even the *Naṟṟiṇai* was













































































































































































